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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

APR 1 1957

Vol. LIII. No. 1357 [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1957 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] NINEPENCE

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Who Wants a Showdown?

Is it to be a pitched battle? Are the shipyards to be closed and the engineering industry disrupted by the most serious trade dispute since the war? Unless some last-minute compromise can be reached, it seems that nothing can stop a trial of strength between the best-organised group of employers and nearly one-third of the trade union movement.

There is nothing impulsive about the strike decisions of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. It is almost a year since the annual conferences of the main unions in the Confederation called for wage increases. It is nine months since the employers flatly declared, before any claims had been submitted, that they would be rejected outright. Indeed, in February, 1956, Mr. Fred Lee of the A.E.U. warned the House that the employers would seek a showdown on the next claim by the engineers. Since claims for the shipyard workers and the engineering employees were submitted last autumn, they have in fact been rejected despite repeated submissions. Given a second refusal to negotiate by the shipbuilders and a fourth rejection by the engineering employers—one spokesman for the employers having declared that "we have got to stand firm and prove to these fellows that things are not done so easily"—the unions had to surrender or "stand firm."

The first course was not possible. Feeling is running high among the union members, and their demand for an increase of 10 per cent. has been strengthened by the rise in living costs since the claim was first presented, by the new impositions laid on them by the higher National Insurance payments, by dearer school meals, cuts in subsidies and dear money policies. The Rent Bill is merely the last straw. For all these reasons the men have decided to fight for their living standards against a combination of the government and the employers.

Mr. Macleod's attempt to appoint Lord Evershed as a "completely impartial" arbitrator in the shipyard dispute may have been well meant: it may also have been intended to persuade the public that the unions are irresponsibly refusing to submit their case to an independent review. But how can anyone hope to arbitrate a case in which one party has repeatedly refused to admit that any claim lies against it? The only way to avert both strikes is for the government to intervene and induce the employers to negotiate.

But is this possible? Mr. Macmillan is faced with passionate demands for action from the diehard wing of his supporters, who argue that Tory turn-coats at recent by-elections can only be won back by a stiffer deflationary policy, softened for the middle and upper class by substantial tax concessions in Mr. Thorneycroft's budget. They want a showdown: if they cannot get tough with Egyptians or Americans, they can find an outlet for their resentment in a damaging struggle with the unions.

That is why this dispute puts Mr. Macmillan in a dilemma. On one side he hears the grumbling of his industrial "Suez group"—egging the employers on to fight it out until the unions are broken. If that view should prevail, the way would be clear for a thoroughgoing Tory domestic policy; the wage situation could be stabilised by the defeat of the unions and the welfare state again eroded by an "opportunity" budget which further redistributes income away from the working-class. But the economy of this country would be ripped open to win such a victory. Or Mr. Macmillan may glance over his other shoulder at the other wing of his party: Tories who sit for marginal constituencies are much less sure that a tough policy is the right one. Yet any concessions to them, any "weakness" in dealing with the "inflationary" wage-claims of the unions, will lead to further anger and disillusionment among the doctrinaire Tories for whom it is now or never. Whichever way Mr. Macmillan decides to resolve this dilemma he buys trouble—for himself and for the country.

Comments on the Week's News

Elections in India

Mr. Nehru interrupted his electioneering last week to speak to the African Students Association in Delhi. But for the election, Mr. Nehru said, he would have been in Ghana that day. The people of Ghana deserved congratulation, he added, but the government and the people of the United Kingdom also deserved credit for this. In the general election, the Congress Party has so far secured an absolute majority in the legislatures of Andhra, Assam, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. About one-third of the total seats in 13 State Assemblies have been filled. Of the 1,068 results, 749 went to the Congress Party, 73 to the Praja Socialists, 44 to the Communists, 22 to the Jan Sangh and the rest to a variety of independents. In Kerala the Communists and Congress are running neck and neck. Unless the Communists and Socialists co-operate (and they failed to do so for the election) a Congress minority government is likely in this state. Generally speaking, the Praja Socialists have polled better than was generally anticipated. Apart from Kerala and West Bengal, the Communists have polled less well. Polling for the Lok Sabha (the central parliament) at the time of going to press shows 47 seats to Congress; Independents, 7; Praja Socialists, 2 and Communists, 1. The Finance Minister (Krishnamachari) has won his seat in Madras South and is likely to go back to the same ministry to work out India's second Five Year Plan. This issue has provided the one common feature of the election manifestoes issued by the four major political parties—Congress, Praja Socialists, Communists and Jan Sangh. *Yojana*, India's new fortnightly edited by Khushwant Singh, points out that a substantial part of each is devoted to stating the party's attitude: planning takes the first place, well ahead of foreign policy.

Problems Ahead of Ghana

Ghana's celebrations are over, but her financial problems have only begun. Ironically, the Act which gave her independence put her outside the scope, not only of colonial welfare grants, but of the loans and technical assistance of the Colonial Development Corporation. Parliamentary protests about this cut across party lines, and there was pressure from such eminent Conservatives as Lord Swinton that the powers of the Corporation should be extended to enable it to help "emergent territories" like Ghana who have not had time to develop their resources as the basis for their own credit-worthiness. Labour amendments on these lines were defeated, but the Government has promised to approach other Commonwealth countries for financial assistance—not only for Ghana, but for other territories such as Malaya, Singapore, Nigeria and the Caribbean Federation who will soon be facing similar problems of independence. The need, however, is not only for capital, but for the unique expertise which the C.D.C. has acquired in promoting development schemes under conditions which do not normally attract private capital. The Labour Party is therefore insisting that the Corporation must not be allowed to wither away. In the meantime Dr. Nkrumah has lost no time in putting forward his own ideas. While urging that the work of the C.D.C. should be extended, he pointed out in a recent speech that the most important element in Ghana's economy is the revenue she receives from the export duty on cocoa. This naturally fluctuates with the export price. At its peak the duty provided no less than 55 per cent. of the revenue of the Gold Coast; but in recent years it has been falling. Dr. Nkrumah's first pre-occupation, therefore, is price stability and he has now proposed that the sterling area should organise a cocoa insurance scheme under which Ghana would be guaranteed against a prolonged slump in world prices of cocoa in return for keeping these important dollar earnings in the sterling area. Since in the past the Gold Coast has contributed one-third of the sterling area's dollar reserves, the British government cannot afford to sweep this suggestion lightly aside, particularly since Russia is now in the market for cocoa supplies.

Shuffle in Spain

The changes in the Franco government are more of a sedative than a stimulant. Though ten of the sixteen ministers were replaced, the shuffle is largely a matter of routine. Franco has made similar changes at intervals since the civil war—in 1945 and 1951—in order to break up any clique that might challenge his authority, and the latest shuffle was due this year. The most important feature of this reorganisation has been the creation of a special commission for economic affairs, consisting of the ministers of finance, industry, agriculture and commerce, which is to be linked to a special office of economic planning directly responsible to Franco. This attempt at planning reflects the growing economic crisis in Spain, where the cost of living has been rising steadily and where the shortage of foreign currency is becoming serious. This crisis has led to an urgent appeal for an extra $30 millions of aid from the U.S. this year. Politically, the most interesting feature of the shuffle has been the transfer of Sr. Arrese to the Ministry of Housing from the post of Secretary-General of the Falange. He was given the latter post a year ago, after the student riots, and instructed to draw up "fundamental laws" which would appease the Falange by giving it a recognised position in the constitution. The proposals drafted by Sr. Arrese would have given the Falange virtual control of the country, and they were rejected out of hand by the non-Falangist ministers and by the army leaders. Franco thereupon shelved them. Sr. Arrese has now been side-tracked into housing policy, and his chief ally in the old government—Sr. Giron, the Minister of Labour—has been removed. This, however, does not mean a victory for the monarchists. Franco is still capable of keeping his quarrelling supporters in a state of uneasy balance.

University Apartheid

Just at the moment when the conflict about university Apartheid in South Africa has reached its height, the University College of Rhodesia has opened its first classes. The question-marks hanging over the academic institutions of both countries are significant for those concerned with the principle of intellectual liberty everywhere. In South Africa one of the last places left where young people of different races can meet and mix with any degree of equality is in the university world of Cape Town and Johannesburg. The South African government is now making a determined effort to close this final loop-hole in its Apartheid fortress. It pleads the case of "separate but equal" academic facilities, promising to build Non-European universities. This case was finally demolished by the United States Supreme Court, when it declared in 1954 that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." In any case, any facilities provided in South Africa for Non-Europeans are always unequal. It is to the credit of everyone concerned with the two "open" universities that staffs, management and students are unanimously protesting against this interference with liberty of thought. They have now published their case in a booklet: *The Open Universities in South Africa*. Meanwhile, the University College of Rhodesia has started its life with 74 students, including eight Africans and one Indian. Apart from the debatable question of separate accommodation, in the whole of their university life all the races will be integrated. One may be dubious about the preponderant numbers of those from Southern Rhodesia—54—yet it is good to see an African woman and Indian women amongst the first student population, and also to know that six of the students came from Britain in preparation for teaching in Central Africa.

Lord Hailsham's Estimates

The campaign launched last week-end by the National Union of Teachers against the government's proposal to replace specific (and percentage) grants to local authorities by a general (and fixed) grant gives voice to misgivings which are widespread in educational circles. Nobody need doubt Lord Hailsham's departmental enthusiasm when he says, as he did last Saturday to the London Headteachers Association: "As long as I am Minister of Education the estimates won't fall." Unfortunately, this jolly generalisation begs a number of questions, the most important of which concerns the relation, financial and otherwise, between the Ministry and the local authorities. On February 12, the Minister of Local Government announced the replacement of the percentage grant by the fixed grant. "The block grant," he said, "should introduce a stabilising influence in the central government's contribution to local expenditure"—and that at a time when educational costs are by common consent bound to go on rising. Any reasonable interpretation of officialese must render this statement as meaning a relative reduction in the government contribution compared with that of the local authorities. Thus, if the education system is to meet the minimum obligations of the 1944 Act, an increased burden is almost bound to fall on the rates; while responsibility for determining priorities for the expenditure of the fixed grant will certainly tend to fall more on the local authorities and less on the central government. Some counties will, no doubt, put education at the head of the list: others will not. Thus the least effect of Mr. Brooke's policy of greater autonomy for local authorities (including backward ones) will be to handicap Lord Hailsham in one of his paramount responsibilities—that of providing broad equality of opportunity for all children, under whichever of the 146 local education authorities they happen to reside. Moreover, all this is coincident with a general government assault on the social services and increasingly influential Tory propaganda aimed at tax reliefs for privately-purchased education. No doubt Lord Hailsham's financial estimates will not go down in a period of inflation—and when the government clearly does intend to increase the allocation for technical education. But so far he has not succeeded in convincing the profession that he has either the will or the authority to resist his colleagues' attempts to economise on primary and secondary schooling.

News from Our Own Correspondents

Washington

Pressure on the Unions

Our Washington Correspondent writes: American trade unions are being pressed by the authorities on three separate fronts—at congressional hearings, in the courts, and in the state legislatures. On Capitol Hill, a Senate committee has been making sensational headlines for the press as its investigation reveals an extraordinary story of vice, corruption and bribery, primarily in the Teamsters' (that is, transport workers) Union—which is led by Dave Beck, who left the country, but returned privily on Monday. Across the street, the Supreme Court ruled this week that a union may be indicted under the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, thus raising the possibility of future restriction upon political activity by labour organisations. Finally, a series of anti-union "right-to-work" laws enacted by a number of states was capped last week by the passage of such an act in Indiana, one of the most highly industrialised and highly unionised states.

It seems inevitable that each session of Congress must produce a quota of muck-raking investigations. What has been going on in the Senate committee room last week has been enough to make any blasé Senator sit up straight in his chair. Gamblers, night-club owners, prostitutes and their madams have been paraded into the witness stand to tell of the sad state of things in Oregon and of their connection with the local bosses of the teamsters union. Robert Kennedy, the chief council of the committee, has relentlessly pursued the witnesses, and provoked many of them into unexpected revelations about the seamy side of life in the city of Portland. At times, it has been difficult to follow the connection between the proceedings of the committee and the purposes for which it was established, but, at least, the investigation has confirmed and documented a long-standing suspicion that some union officials are racketeers. The leaders of the AFL-CIO have laid down a code of ethics and are making a determined effort to clean out shady characters.

While most trade unionists approve the exposure of the few racketeers and gangsters who batten on the movement, they resent the emphasis of the Senate hearings. The Senate inquiry is being made by the Select Committee of Labour and Management Practices, but so far it has made no effort to investigate the activities of management. Stung into action by union complaints, Mr. Kennedy has now promised that the committee will take a hard look at employers in the New York area—but only to examine allegations of possible collusion with union bosses.

Labour's setback in the Supreme Court arose from a case affecting the United Automobile Workers. Though it is doubtful whether the unions can in fact deliver a "union vote" at election times, their money is certainly extremely helpful in the campaign of individual candidates. The auto workers spent large sums for television progammes in support of Senator McNamara of Michigan during the 1954 election. Subsequently, the union was indicted under the Federal Corrupt Practices Act on the grounds that the use of a trade union's general funds including membership dues for political campaign purposes is an unwarranted corruption of the electoral process. The indictment was dismissed in a lower court, which declared these expenditures were beyond the scope of the Act. The Supreme Court has now reinstated the indictment and the case has been returned to the lower court for trial.

The "right-to-work" laws in a number of states are perhaps the most serious threat to organised labour. Under these laws, "union shops" can be forbidden, which means that membership of a union cannot be made a condition for continued employment. Without such conditions, the unions in many industries will be seriously weakened. There is some evidence that these laws have been promoted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business lobbyists, who have been hawking draft bills round state legislatures. The press has paid remarkably little attention to this legislation because it has been enacted piecemeal—the first of these laws was passed several years ago, and though a dozen states have followed suit, most of them have relatively little industry and weak trade unionisms. Indiana, however, has large steel mills, automobile plants, aircraft factories and other industry. The "right-to-work" law in this state is a real blow to trade unionism, not least because it may presage similar laws in other industrialised states.

Peking

Contraception and the Party

A Student of the Chinese press writes: China has now followed India in accepting that, without planned childbirth, freedom from poverty is impossible. The population, Health Minister Lee Teh-chuan told a conference last week, is now growing at the rate of 15 millions annually. Contraception, the women were told plainly at a recent conference, is a "positive method of birth control." The masses must understand that "artificial abortion is a negative method of birth control." Since the popularisation of modern methods of delivery, "about two million more infants and 200,000 more confined mothers survive annually than in pre-liberation days." It is quite natural that this problem has a special meaning in the textile industry with its vast number of women employees. The *Hsin Hunan Pao* described a publicity campaign launched by the Hsiangtan textile mill, where "women workers have felt the increasing pinch of too many children both in health and pecuniary consideration. They want no more babies." "Incomplete statistics," the paper adds, "show that 70 per cent. of the women workers and clerks have used contraceptive contrivances or eaten Chinese herbs that have contraceptive efficiency. On blackboards, posters and radio programmes publicity has been made on contraception. The contraceptive guidance groups have also undertaken registration of workers who desire to have no more babies and make monthly routine calls to get timely advice on contraception." When Mr. Shao Li-tsu told a Peking conference of the single comprehensive method of swallowing tadpoles to prevent conception, many provincial papers reprinted his speech and created a great deal of interest in the method. The *Chien Kang Pao*, mouthpiece of the Ministry of Health, at first supported Mr. Shao's thesis, but more recently, local medical authorities have received many requests from women's conferences for a proper study of the subject. Reporting one such conference in January, 1957, the *Changsha Hsin Hunan Pao* described a great variety of work; "symposia for residential committees of children and women's homes"; "an exhibition propagating the knowledge of contraception," attended by 7,000 people with the accompanying distribution of 300 copies of contraception brochures; "a pictorial exhibition which toured in the suburbs and villages." This publicity is not lost on the men. "A man named Wu Jen-tsao at Yueyanshsien, having seen the exhibition, said 'My wife had too many births. So she used musk and quinine to get abortion. The result was she was laid up for several months and nearly died. I certainly appreciate the party and government's concern for the people'." The *Peking Daily Worker* reflects the difficulties of women textile workers, in a resolution passed by the National Committee of the China Textile Trade Union, "condemning the practice of requiring women workers suffering from miscarriage to produce, within 24 hours, physical proof of their right to leave . . ; such practice, still followed by certain textile mills is contrary to the laws of the state and insulting to the character of the workers. This practice of discrediting the masses and insulting the integrity of women workers has touched off popular discontent."

Moscow

Flowers and Weeds

Our Moscow Correspondent writes: A good deal more than a relaxing of international tension depends on what decisions are taken in the West on the question of re-establishing cultural relations with the Soviet Union. The return to partial isolation, imposed this time from outside, has already encouraged some of those artists, critics and writers who had fallen into discredit since Stalin's death to campaign against their successors. So far this has been confined to covert intrigue, including attempts to collect signatures to letters of protest and the publication of abusive unsigned articles, and to oblique attacks on the policy of wider contacts with abroad such as the violent criticism of the magazine *Polska* imported from Warsaw.

The Soviet intelligentsia is acutely sensitive to foreign criticism. There is no surer way to popularity at home than success abroad. It was London and Paris that made Oleg Popov the U.S.S.R.'s favourite clown; Latin American audiences that opened Russian ears to the beauty of Bezrodny's violin playing; and there is even a different quality in the applause that greets the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet since its triumph at Covent Garden. Soviet choreographers returned from London deeply impressed by much of the friendly, informed criticism they read in England; while Soviet artists who attended last year's Biennale, though yielding no ground in their stand against abstract painting, returned full of criticism of the "photographism" of many Soviet paintings.

The point is that the whole attitude towards foreign culture has changed. A generation was brought up to equate patriotism with the belief that Soviet—and, for that matter, Russian—achievements in the arts and sciences were superior to those of any other land. To think otherwise was to be guilty of "kowtowing," sometimes of "anti-patriotic activities." The extremes to which this point of view led are notorious: pastry-cooks hurriedly changed the names of their *millefeuilles* and *éclairs*; literary critics sought to prove that Russian literature of the past had never been in the least influenced by foreign works; jazz was taboo, and Moscow's new skyscrapers were referred to as "multi-storey buildings." To many a young Russian all this was not only unconvincing, it was highly demoralising; for when the truth was learned—and it could not be long withheld—the whole basis of patriotism seemed to be

shaken. The party was late in taking countermeasures. It is still reluctant to hold a plenum on ideological matters, perhaps because Shepilov, who has more influence with the intelligentsia than the monkish Suslov and the professorial Pospelov, was fully engaged elsewhere. But on general lines the party's policy seems to be to revive enthusiasm for the Communist cause without a return to cultural autarchy. The public will be allowed a fair measure of cultural contacts with the bourgeois world, but it must learn discrimination. For though the Chinese comrades are right to urge that all flowers should be allowed to grow in the garden, weeds must be kept out of Soviet soil.

Most of the discussions going on among the intelligentsia today are concerned with distinguishing between the flowers and the weeds. There are plenty of people who for reasons of self-interest are only too ready to hoe up a good deal that has grown during the past two or three years. A village teacher wrote of the anxieties that have been roused: "In Tula recently I attended a lecture on literature. The lecturer said that at present there was much talk about the struggle against bourgeois ideology and that we ought to draw our conclusions from that. When I told our teachers about it one of them threw her hands into the air and exclaimed: 'So that's the end of books like *The Quiet American!* And we all enjoyed it so much—as we do other good books by Hemingway, Remarque and others.' I argued with her. In my opinion, the conclusions she drew were absurd. . . ." The attitude of many members of the Soviet intelligentsia towards the West has become not only more tolerant of those who hold different views from their own but also more discriminating towards uncritical admirers. A salutary lesson has been learned from the fact that some of those who today have taken up an anti-Soviet stand were, a few years ago, uncritical admirers of everything Soviet. "Love for the Soviet Union," Ehrenburg wrote recently, "love of Soviet culture ought to have nothing in common with the doctrine of infallibility . . . We want no blind affection, but one that is intelligent and that can be useful to our country and its culture." And turning to the question of cultural relations in general Ehrenburg wrote: "Our attitude to American science, English literature and French painting ought not to depend on the mood in which Mr. Dulles woke up, the speech Mr. Selwyn Lloyd has just made, or on what ministry is in power in France."

Westminster

After Queen Anne

Some two centuries ago, the House of Commons was composed of members who belonged to the King's Party and members who did not. Because the King could offer jobs, involving good pay and little work, his party tended to grow. Consequently, in self preservation, opponents of the King's Party celebrated the arrival of a Queen, Anne, by passing an Act to disqualify anyone who held "an office of profit under the Crown" from membership of the House.

The Act had at once to be amended; for it was found that under it all members of the government were excluded and this, however seemingly attractive, involved too great a change in the British constitution. There were other defects in the Act. It did not clearly define what "office of profit under the Crown" meant; and it did not list specifically what offices debarred the holder from membership. As a result, through the centuries and during especially the past ten years, innocently intentioned men have found themselves liable to punitive fines because they had been elected to the House while holding offices from which technically they were barred.

One M.P. was an unpaid member of a panel advising the National Assistance Board. It was doubtful whether he was "under the Crown." It was almost certain that his position could not legally be described as "an office." It was certain that he derived no "profit." Another member, at the urgent request of the Treasury, audited some charitable accounts for which the Treasury had nominal responsibility. He was performing a public service. He received a token fee, accepted with reluctance, only to meet a Treasury technicality. But both men were found liable to a fine of £500 for every day they remained a member of the House and had to be indemnified.

Finally convinced by two and a half centuries of experience that some change was required, the House of Commons has this week been discussing a new Disqualification Bill and has considered not only the disqualifications imposed under Queen Anne but others which bar Roman Catholic priests, Anglican clergy, bankrupts, lunatics and peers. The lawyers have had a splendid time. Instead of the old vague generality they have drawn a detailed list of those offices which are to disqualify a member. From now on anyone who thinks of standing for parliament can look at this list and see if he is qualified. As Clement Davies said, it would probably be better to put things the other way round so that the holder of a listed office, instead of being automatically barred from membership, should, on seeking membership, be automatically barred from the office. This apart, the change is sensible—especially the exemption of recalled reservists protects members from losing their seats at a moment of national emergency.

A third change seems at first sight to be less justifiable. To prevent corruption and lobbying the old Act prevented some men who received government contracts from remaining as members. But the provision has now been scrapped, partly because even the lawyers did not know what it meant, partly because the possession of even one share in a company which did a job for the government could lead to disqualification, and partly because, if a member nowadays were so involved, the House has other ways of dealing with him.

But despite the proposed changes, some interesting anomalies still remain. In 1801 the House disqualified Anglican clergymen, i.e., clergymen of the established churches, mainly because Mr. Addington wanted to be rid of the somewhat irreverend Horne Tooke who was a radical nuisance. But, since the Welsh Church is now disestablished, any Anglican clergyman can become eligible for the House by taking a curacy in Wales for a few weeks. Why should any clergyman, except those holding Crown livings, be barred? Certainly it is absurd to maintain unchanged a law which can so easily be circumvented.

An even more interesting anomaly is to remain. The lawyers in the House have produced something which, in parts, is even intelligible to their non-legal colleagues. Oddly enough the part which they have made most clear is that, whereas other men must be protected from the insidious corruptions of government, lawyers may continue to accept briefs from the Attorney General and even paid Recorderships without forfeiting membership of the House. The suspicious mind of Mr. George Wigg suggested that there was something odd about this, that after all Queen Anne might not yet be quite dead. But the lawyers assured him that it was quite all right.

J. P. W. MALLALIEU

"Dammit—a British Stag loves being hunted, what!"

Deadlock in Cross Purpose

On February 11 last, Mr. Shepilov, then Soviet Foreign Minister, sent a note to the western powers enunciating six "principles" on which peace in the Middle East ought to be based. They can be summarised:

1. Disputed questions to be settled exclusively by negotiation.
2. Non-interference in the internal affairs of countries of the area.
3. No attempts to include these countries in military blocs with the participation of the great powers.
4. Liquidation of foreign bases and withdrawal of foreign troops.
5. Mutual renunciation of the supply of arms to Middle Eastern countries.
6. Co-operation towards economic development, without political or military conditions attached.

Last Monday the western powers, not having bothered to reply before, dismissed these proposals as not being, in the words of the British note, "a serious contribution towards the fulfilment of their professed aims" on the general grounds that Soviet policy itself does not currently conform to them.

In the period straddled by this melancholy exchange, the tide of history has swept on. Ten days ago, Mr. Ben-Gurion committed himself to the "act of faith" of withdrawal from the Israel positions in Sinai without explicit U.N. guarantees. Hard on the heels of the withdrawing Israel army, came the carefully fomented rioting in the Gaza refugee camps, the appointment in Cairo of a new governor of Gaza, and all the circumstantial preliminaries for a return to the *status quo*—at least in the Gaza Strip. But the *status quo*—which, as we write, is not yet an accomplished fact—must almost inevitably mean a renewal of armed conflict in its gravest form. Israel has gambled on the protection of the U.N., and her people will not wait to be picked off one by one at the convenience of Colonel Nasser's commandos.

How can the U.N. provide the protection to which Israel is entitled? If it fails, two consequences follow: first, no other power will ever put its trust in the U.N. to act as an impartial policeman; secondly, the peace of the whole world will continue to be threatened by the repercussions of the Israel-Arab conflict. Yet, as things are, the U.N. is helpless; for the great powers are deadlocked in cross purpose. Russia is cynically backing all the extremes of Arab nationalism and Muslim chauvinism. Britain and France, in varying degrees and for various reasons, are struggling with the Arab nationalists and committed to at least some degree of support for Israel. The U.S., seeking to occupy all it can of the imperial positions from which Britain and France are being ousted and, at the same time, to outbid the Russians for the good will of the Arab feudalists, straddles uncomfortably and unpredictably between the two positions.

One of the effects of this unhealthy situation is that the western powers—and most of all the U.S.—are open to permanent Arab blackmail over Israel. Another is that the U.N. itself is hamstrung. Inside the Security Council, either the French or the Russian veto will obstruct any radical alternative to the existing anarchy in the Middle East; while in the General Assembly (where at the time of Korea the U.S. could count on a decisive majority) the balance of influence has changed. Each group—the western powers on the one hand and the Soviet and Afro-Asian blocs, which on Middle East matters normally vote together, on the other—can count on the third of the votes necessary to obstruct the other: but neither can be sure of commanding the two-thirds necessary to override the deadlocked Security Council and impose positive decisions.

In these circumstances, U.N. policy is merely a hotch-potch of shifts and expedients, devoid of principle and of all purpose other than the prosecution of cold war. Nor is this surprising, for the U.N. was never designed to work in these conditions. Those who created it, learning realistically from the failures of the League of Nations, understood that none of the great powers would, when the moment came, submit to the dictates of a majority which opposed it on any matter of vital issue. That is why the veto was built into the Charter. But with the right of veto went the assumption that the great power "unity," which prevailed through the war, would continue. That assumption is basic to the design of the U.N. and without it the machine cannot work.

Last October, the joint desire of Russia and America to halt the spreading war provided sufficient unity to make the U.N. effective for a few crucial weeks. Now that particular threat is passed, there is no further pretence of any sort of unity of purpose, and the U.N. is once again at the mercy of every special interest. So we arrive at the odd position where the western powers insist, as a matter of principle, that Israel (to whom they are beholden) must place her security in the hands of the U.N. and at the same time, by refusing to take seriously the Soviet note, make it absolutely certain that the U.N. remains incapable of discharging the responsibility. No wonder the Israelis are growing desperate in their bitterness.

Of course, the Shepilov proposals are not acceptable as they stand. It may even be that, in the Soviet view, they lapsed with Mr. Shepilov's change of office. But the British complaint that Soviet policy does not at present conform to them is of itself sufficient proof that they are not wholly bad. They do provide a basis for negotiation—which might fail. Without negotiation we get the worst of all worlds. As a matter of propaganda, we put ourselves in the wrong when we need not. As a matter of hard politics, we betray Israel; we saddle ourselves with the permanent hazard of hostile engagement in the Middle East, the area in which the threat of general war now seems most real; and we go a very long way towards ensuring that the U.N. as a political force will be reduced to impotence and futility.

Prosperity Limited

The notice caught my eye when I was drinking a chocolate malted in a bus station in Alabama. Among the soft-drink advertisements and the calendar girls it warned any of us who might have doubts about the way of life: "Remember," it read, "More Americans Have More." True. Men may need a little more assurance in a share-cropping district in Alabama than they do at Malibu Beach. But you do not have to persuade Americans that they live in the best part of an impossible world. They know, without bothering to read the little catalogues you sometimes see printed on the back of a menu, which show that most of the world's cars, telephones, washing machines and frozen foodstuffs are to be found within the United States.

Yet, returning to the U.S. after an interval of six years, I was struck less by the material prosperity or the endless incantation of statistics—those were there before—than by the way people now take prosperity for granted. Every year, it has seemed impossible that the luck could last, and each year the American system has gone on working—so that even professional economists now look at the economy with the awe of a gambler who sees black come up ten times running. Admittedly, life is expensive. Most of one's friends seem chronically short of ready cash—more than half the middle-income families have cash assets of less than $500—yet they live well enough, fantastically well by the standards of any other country.

In all this, of course, the instalment system plays a crucial part. For all the attempts to curb it, consumer credit has been piling up at a fantastic rate since the end of the war, and a very large proportion of current buying is done on credit of one kind or another. I recall a witty cartoon by Herblock in the November election. He showed a group of Democratic donkeys—the party symbol—looking at Republican elephants parading with such slogans as "Two cars in every garage." "Let's promise 'em enough," says a Democrat, "to keep up the payments on what they've got."

That is one reason why Adlai Stevenson was defeated last year. It is very hard to argue, as he did, that the economy is being mismanaged in the interests of big business unless there is some fairly widespread and striking proof that it is being mismanaged. And for all the difficulties that have beset the farmers, for example, or the auto and textile workers, there are none of the emotive symbols which would recall the collapse of the Thirties to a generation that is fast forgetting that it ever happened. The boom seems to be here to stay—and if you haven't got your share today, then you will tomorrow. This seems to be the assumption on which such optimistic Fair Dealers as Professor Homan rest their case.

More Americans have more. But the peculiarities of American history and politics have prevented the development of a political party which voices clearly the discontents of the poor. And those who do do badly out of the system, if only in comparative terms, do not combine as they have combined behind the Labour Party in this country. While the trend of the Democrats in the northern states is towards a farmer-labour-small business party—and their propaganda increasingly strikes this note in these areas—there is no coherent attempt to rally those Americans who have less and to focus their grievances. In Britain, we know pretty well what are the weaknesses of our economy and the shortcomings of the welfare state, partly because we have both a Labour Party and progressively minded sociologists who articulate them, and partly because we are a relatively homogeneous society which nowadays emphasises social welfare rather than personal success. But, for all their mobility, Americans are locally minded: their country is really too big and too diverse to be comprehended as a whole, and so they mind their own affairs. A New Yorker need no more care about a Georgia tenant farmer than

a Shropshire shopkeeper cares about the slum-dwellers of Genoa.

So, as you move across the United States, you get a curious sense of seeing a succession of local social problems rather than a clear pattern of a structural failure in the system as a whole. And these problems, it is true, are not always what they seem to be at first sight. Bad housing, for example, does not always imply what I may call "consumption poverty." I remember seeing wooden shacks in a hill county in Kentucky, ramshackle absurdities that barely kept out the weather. They belonged to a small mining company, and the miners had to live in them, for there was nowhere else to live. But the miners were earning fairly good wages—good enough to afford washing machines and refrigerators on the instalment plan. These household gadgets stood incongruously on the tilting front porches, for there was no room for them in the little houses.

Bad housing, however, is perhaps the worst of the gaps in prosperity. The U.S. has slums as bad as or worse than anything we know. About one quarter of all American families live in urban or rural slums, and according to the 1950 census ten million houses needed replacement because they had sub-standard amenities—no running water, no private lavatory or bath, no proper kitchen, any or all of these. Despite the post-war housing boom, and the spread of the suburbs, the slum problem remains acute. It is, moreover, a problem of gross overcrowding as well as of physical condition. It is worst, possibly, in New York, where the pressure of Puerto Rican immigration has come on top of Negro overcrowding. But it is very bad in other large cities, and neither federal nor local schemes have kept pace with the demand for low-income housing. I have seen some of the projects, now becoming more common, whereby a city seeks to arrest the decay of its centre and the growth of its suburbs by turning inward and redeveloping its blighted heart. But too often such projects mean that low-rented slums are cleared to build modern apartment blocks, stores and offices—pleasant enough as exercises in town planning—without offering alternative homes at reasonable rents to the displaced tenants. And most rural areas have no public housing at all. People live in what they have, or what they can afford to build wholly or partly for themselves.

And what can they afford? In 1955, there were 22 million Americans living in families with an annual income below $4,000. While this is certainly above a "poverty-line," it is about the minimum for a decent existence by American standards—and these standards, relative rather than absolute, are important in an economy based upon what one can only call "consumer incitement." About 12 million families have less than $3,000 a year (and I am excluding single earners, who may be juveniles or part-timers); and, if one takes $2,000 as the real poverty-line for family income, there are 8 million families that fall below it. Three million families have a money income below $1,000.

Who are these people? In the cities they are Negroes, Puerto Ricans, some Irish, Italians and Poles who have remained in the low-paid and unskilled "entry" trades. In the rural areas they are small farmers and farm workers, many of whom again are Negroes—or Mexicans who have legally or illegally crossed the border. For them, life is a struggle which is often desperate, especially if natural hazards or a fall in farm prices disturb the precarious balance of their lives. Such people have few reserves, especially if they are tenant farmers or share-croppers, and deep poverty can come quickly.

The causes of rural poverty are complicated, and the setting of farm prices one of the most elaborate parts of the American political machine. But the simple fact is that modern methods of production have raised farm output and reduced the need for farm labour. Since 1950, farm production has gone up by 50 per cent., while the farm population has fallen by one-third. Farming has become a big business. There are about 5½ million farms in the U.S., and 3½ million of them yield only 15 per cent. of marketable farm produce. At the other end of the scale, 70,000 large farms cover one-third of the land in the U.S. And it is these large farms that dominate farm politics, which block all attempts to unionise farm workers, establish a minimum wage, provide unemployment or health insurance; and the farm lobby also controls pricing policies, and determines the form and scale of government aid to agriculture—such as the Eisenhower administration's "soil bank" which works mainly in the interest of the large operator.

For such reasons, farm poverty is endemic; and from this poverty spring ignorance, prejudice and many of the social evils which follow from rural domination of politics on the state level, especially in the southern states. In the same way, urban slums and overcrowding create the social problems that are acute in many industrial centres. And, for all its virtues, the American system has not yet found a way of focusing its resources for welfare in these two sectors. Relatively speaking, the gap between wealth and poverty seems to be widening. Though the rate of growth in the national economy has slowed down in the last five years, profits and dividends have been increasing far more quickly than wages: corporate profits, for example, have risen 30 per cent. faster than personal incomes, and investment has gone up twice as fast as consumption. At the same time, farm income has declined by about 3½ per cent. each year.

The result of this distribution of the national income is that, for all the wealth of the United States, a smaller proportion of the national product each year goes to low-income families and social welfare. The public education system is a case in point: it is in urgent need of at least 600,000 new classrooms (cost about $21,000 millions), of 80,000 more teachers, apart from replacements to meet normal wastage, and of more money for books and equipment. Medical care may be grievously inadequate or ruinously expensive for families with incomes below $5,000 a year—and that is about half the population. And, despite recent improvements, provision for old age and survivors' benefits still falls far short of genuine need.

Yet because political responsibility for dealing with these problems is dissipated over so many authorities—it is part federal, part state, part county, part city—and because there are so many regional diversities and cross-currents of political pressure, these dissatisfactions are never drawn together to make a coherent political programme. Of course, the United States has produced a better life (in the material sense) for more people than any other system has yet managed. But its real peculiarity is not the post-war ability of U.S. capitalism to maintain this prosperity: it is the way in which the American political system has prevented about one-half the nation from combining in its own and the public interest to demand that the gaps in this prosperity be closed and that these great resources should be directed collectively for the general welfare. So many Americans do not know either what needs to be done, or what could be done. And that is the greatest triumph of American capitalism.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

London Diary

How refreshing it would have been if, confronted with Hugh Dalton's account of Attlee's Cabinet-making in 1945, Mr. Morrison had chuckled when the press rang him up and replied somewhat as follows:— "So Hugh Dalton's got in first with that story, has he? How annoyed Morgan Phillips will be; he has been telling it in whispers and saving it up for a future book for years! I am sorry I didn't write it myself; I could have told it better; after all, I'm the person who knows most about it. But then Hugh had the advantage that he left the pursuit of office before me and so he could get on with the job of memoir-writing before I had a chance. After all, what have I got to be ashamed of? 1945 was my last chance of becoming prime minister. I thought I was a better man for the job than Clem and had every right to ask for a party vote on it. The timing was just wrong for me. Attlee got in automatically, when we unexpectedly won in 1945 and a government had to be formed quickly. There were a lot of people who favoured me rather than Clem, amongst them, oddly enough, Harold Laski, who, like many other people, under-estimated Attlee's capacity for leadership. Looking back, of course, I am disappointed that I lost the race, but it may well be that I wouldn't have made as good a job of it as Attlee did." If Morrison had said something like that everyone would have been pleased and he would have regained at least a little of his old popularity. But something happens to these political figures. Somehow he has got to pretend that, unlike all the other Toms, Dicks and Herberts, he has always been "selfless," and without any of that natural ambition which is an essential part of the make-up of any politician.

* * * *

If I were Herbert I should anticipate other revelations by giving a good-tempered and careful account of my relations with Ernest Bevin. Herbert's special political quality is courage, and he was almost alone amongst the top Labour brass in standing up to the trade union bosses, who, as Ernie Bevin was quite happy to emphasise, ultimately paid the bill and commanded the allegiance. I believe his quarrel with Bevin first arose from the big Labour victory in the L.C.C. in 1934, when Bevin's union subscribed heavily to Labour funds and thereafter expected Morrison always to back Bevin in negotiations between his union and the L.C.C. I used to hear a lot about this rivalry, and accept, with a tinge of unworthy regret, the explanation given by Attlee to Dalton for his change of mind in putting Bevin in the Foreign Office and Dalton at the Exchequer. Attlee's account is that on reflection he couldn't face the quarrels that would follow if Morrison and Bevin were together on the home front. This reasonable explanation seems to kill the various stories about Buckingham Palace having a say in the matter. Dalton, whose father had been tutor to the princes, was always regarded in royal circles as a bit of a renegade, and it may well be true that George VI was alarmed at stories that Dalton would be too "soft" with the Russians. Another popular version is that the King (maybe through his private secretary) told Attlee that he ought to appoint "his strongest man at the Foreign Office, while any competent accountant could run the Treasury." Whether the King really, as it is said, took credit for keeping Dalton out of the Foreign Office may, as Dalton himself says, be revealed when Mr. Wheeler Bennett produces the life of George VI based on research into the royal archives.

What does Sir Hartley Shawcross want? This is inevitably the current topic of speculation, not only in the press, but in the tea rooms of the House of Commons. His decision to leave the Bar does not surprise me; men of his brilliance are seldom satisfied with purely forensic triumphs. When their material ambitions are satisfied, status becomes all important. No doubt, like Sir Walter Monckton before him, Sir Hartley has reconciled himself to the fact that he is unlikely to be Lord Chief Justice. Personally, I don't believe he will remain satisfied for long with the part-time job of legal adviser to the Royal Dutch-Shell group of companies. At 55 this savours too much of the sort of eclipse Sir Walter has undergone at 66 by taking a peerage and a directorship of the Midland Bank. Superficially, the two men have much in common; successful advocates are seldom solid "party men." But I believe Sir Hartley, who has always been a Labour man, does cherish political ambitions. He wasn't happy at the Board of Trade, but, ever since he went to U.N. for the Attlee government, he has seen himself as a highly effective Labour Foreign Secretary. Whether or not he still has this possibility in mind, his return to active politics comes at an opportune moment for some of the party's right-wing members who have become restive at Nye Bevan's growing influence. The party is now united, as Clem Attlee always said it must be, on a line "left of centre." To the men of the right, therefore, Sir Hartley's return might be a godsend; he is, they believe, with them on political issues and he is the only man who could rival Nye's dominance of Parliament. Their plan is to build up Sir Hartley's position—and division record—and get him back on to the front bench.

* * *

I see that the Hungarian Legation has been at pains to deny that members of the A.V.H. are active among the refugees here. Perhaps they don't need to be; there are other embassies better versed in the arts of "tailing." A friend of mine, who teaches at one of our centres of adult education, tells me a curious little story. The college, which makes a feature of special courses in English for foreign students, was asked to fit in a number of Hungarian refugees in the middle of the current term and readily agreed. A fortnight later three men presented themselves at the college office; the eldest, who spoke fluent English, explained that they were from the Soviet Embassy and that he wanted to enrol his two colleagues for an English course. On being told there were no vacancies, he looked nonplussed but stubborn; were there not vacancies in some other course, he insisted: typewriting, for instance, banking, insurance? As this was the first time the Embassy had ever shown any interest in the college's facilities, the clerk thought it was time he consulted the principal who instructed that the visitors should be told politely that they must apply in the normal way for the next session.

* * *

The Air Ministry has not acted very wisely in refusing to give the public inquiry that the crofters of the Hebridean islands of South Uist and Benbecula are demanding before the new rocket range which has been estimated to cost £12,000,000 is begun. It is true that the islanders were rather late in discovering that about 30 crofts and about 3,000 acres of land would be affected, but there is no doubt now about the feeling that has been roused. This is a part of the world which reacts strongly against any move to drive crofters off the land and when Father John Morrison declared that the crofters would never leave and that the range would have to be built "over their dead bodies" he was expressing, rather melodramatically perhaps, a determination which might well cause the government trouble. Not only Sir Compton Mackenzie and the Scottish Nationalists are backing the angry crofters. "The islanders," said *The Scotsman* in a leading article, "are objecting on practical grounds and if their fears are groundless, the government ought to be able to convince them by putting their cards on the table. It is ridiculous to treat them like petulant children because they will not agree that the expert defence planners know best what is good for them."

* * *

The arguments about stag-hunting amount to this. The carted stag is kept for the pleasure of the hunter; there is no other case for turning the poor tame thing loose, hunting it nearly to death and then saving it up for another day. For Exmoor hunting two contrary arguments are put forward. The first is that the deer do damage to crops and are kept down by hunters; the second is that if it wasn't for the hunters the deer would be exterminated. Add these two statements together and they amount to a plea that the huntsmen preserve just enough deer to hunt but not enough to do an excessive amount of damage to their crops. Hypocrisy aside, the reason for this procedure is that it is enjoyable to hunt. The solution to the problem of both preserving the crops and the species is to keep deer in parks where people can enjoy their beauty (maybe fencing off a piece of Exmoor for the purpose) and getting rid of the rest by organised shoots conducted by expert hunters. Unfortunately any such rational approach to the subject is obfuscated by people like Sir Bernard Waley-Cohen, who the other day told newspaper men:

> Hunting is in no sense cruel. There is no reason to assume that the hunted stag is not just as happy when he is being chased as he is when he is fighting to claim another deer for a wife.

What can you do with such a man?

CRITIC

This England

Prizes: £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

So far as illegitimacy was concerned it was found that better-class residential boroughs in various parts of the country showed similar figures to those of Cheltenham, namely seven or more per cent. of all infants born were illegitimate. The average for the rest of the country was less than 5 per cent.—*Birmingham Post & Gazette.* (R. Snadow.)

Even if she were seriously ill, Miss Alice Harding, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce at Blackheath, London, would refuse to be treated by coloured doctors or nurses.

She shocked members of the chamber yesterday when she told them that she thought employment of coloured hospital staff was "absolutely revolting." And she added: "If it's revolting to me, it must be revolting to other people."—*News Chronicle.* (R. Dickins.)

Said 44-year-old miner Mr. John Egginton, of Wolverhampton Road: "I don't know what the council was thinking of when it chose the statue. It must think you can't have art without nudes. Cannock is a homely town and not the sort of place where you have to stoop to bad taste to get anything appreciated.—*Daily Worker.* (W. L. Dunton.)

Employees of Reading Corporation are to be told that if they want to get married they must do so in their annual leave periods. This was decided by the council on Tuesday despite a plea from Councillor James Wallace for "more kindness." He urged the council to allow employees to marry when they wanted to—and not to order.—*Reading Mercury.* (G. P. Barford.)

We, by Us

"Europe has nothing to offer Britain" (*Daily Express* leader).

Hence, vain, deceptive Greek,
The lexicon of Cypriot discontent,
And Latin, only meant
For Virgil and those ancient Wops to speak;
Hence, Goethe, till I'm certain
That all Teutonic poets have been tried
And—once de-Nazified—
Are no more read behind the Iron Curtain.

Ye fickle French, beware,
Whether at cooking or at dress design
You shoot a line,
Like Gauguin daub or scribble like Voltaire,
We've had enough of you,
Seduced by Marianne to fight her wars
From the Crimean to
This last, preposterous affair of yours.

Beethoven, Bach and Brahms
Shall be forgotten in the Village Hall,
But (worst of all)
Music hath savage breasts to rouse the qualms
Of nausea in us
Who fear the ballet of th'insidious Russ;
So from our land
Let all the arts of Muscovy be banned.

Now with Australian wine fill up the bowl
And let us all extoll
The culture products of the Union Jack.
Let Kipling rant and Robert Service roll
And Adam Lindsay Gordon join the pack;
Then (purged of foreign sources)
Chaucer and Shakespeare could augment the forces. . . .
Drink to them all—
God's Englishmen and God and Montreal—
And glory, ye Elect, in this reflection:
With God, thank God, there is no by-election!

REGINALD REYNOLDS

Operation Pavement

RENT Bill salesmen have been kept pretty busy lately assuring an anxious public that eviction is terror-proof. There is, they explain, enough accommodation to go round—never mind where or at what price—statistics prove it. The housing shortage is going to be solved by a jolly game of general post. What these people keep remarkably quiet about is the fate of the odd men out: the families whose efforts to find another roof will, disobligingly, fail; and who will then have no option but to stay where they are until the bailiffs force them out. Where, the public is beginning to ask, will they go from there? And what, in fact, happens to evicted families as things are now?

First, husbands and wives are separated. Provision, by county councils, is made only for mothers and children, and that with much rubbing in of the fact that there is no legal obligation to do so. This sense of receiving a charity is one of the greatest humiliations the homeless family has to bear, especially as it has to pay towards its keep in money and domestic labour; but it is not, unhappily, the only one.

Until very recently the destination of the mother and children in London was commonly known as a "rest centre"; now, because it is no longer a stepping-stone towards being rehoused, it is called "short stay" accommodation. The rough difference between this and "temporary shelter" is that the latter, although housed in the

same building, provides refuge (officially for one night only) for those who, it is held, could have prevented their homelessness—such as stranded families from the provinces or wives who have left home after a quarrel; while the former is reserved for those, like the evicted, who could not help themselves. These unfortunates, who already are not exclusively working class, are seldom told how long they can stay, for the smallest sense of security is discouraged; but three months is the usual maximum. When time is up, the family is told it must go and shift for itself—which it could not do in the first place. Certain "unsatisfactory" cases are even forcibly re-evicted, this time by the police. Illness is the only defence and this is, therefore, often assumed—but, just as often, detected.

It might be imagined that short stay accommodation is a kind of hostel especially designed for its purpose. But in spite of much euphemism, it is, in fact, the workhouse—now dubbed Welfare Home. Such of these homes as have in recent years taken in families as well as old people, possess their own admitting offices; and it is to the nearest of these that the homeless family must still go first to be vetted. This may mean a longish trudge since there are only seven admitting offices in London; but the subsequent journey is likely to be much longer because (with the exception of two subsidiaries to which transfer may later be made), there is at the moment only one home for short stay; and that is in S.E.17.

This shutting down of homes could hardly be more misleading, suggesting as it does that their need is past. The truth is, rather, that conditions in them were made so intolerable and degrading that self-respecting families have preferred any possible alternative. Most endure separation: the mother and children squeezing in with reluctant and already overcrowded relatives, the father going into lodgings. Such families are not officially considered homeless; and if, after years, health or marriage or both break down—it is just one of those things.

Present policy towards the homeless is, of course, dictated by the terrible severity of the housing shortage. The L.C.C. can barely find enough accommodation for those it displaces by slum clearance, let alone for the 53,000 families on its urgent and almost static waiting list. That it "has to clear out the homeless" is, therefore, understandable; but that this has to be done by "making them a bit uncomfortable" begs one or two questions.

What, for instance, does "a bit uncomfortable" mean to the victims? "When I went to the admitting office with the children," one woman told me: "I was treated like a prostitute off the streets. We were kept there hours being questioned; and by the time we got over to south London we were all crying and the children were quite worn out. Yes, they did give us something to eat, but it was just like pigs' food, and all slopped into one tin can for the six of us. All the meals were served like that." At the subsidiary home to which they were transferred they slept in a dormitory. "There were 17 women and girls—and only one lavatory. Our beds were down the middle and there weren't any curtains to pull. The boys' room was next door and they kept coming through while we were undressing. But the feel of the place was the worst. It was as if we'd committed a crime."

Although this home is less rigorous than the main one, experience proved it no bed of roses. Bells clanged for rising; lumpy porridge or "a few baked beans" were obtainable, by queueing, for breakfast; scrubbing and polishing followed; the daily monotony was broken on Fridays by a head inspection; hungry inmates who spent their assistance allowance on corned beef and rolls, instead of on soap and shoe polish, were coldly reprimanded. The last meal of the day was at 7 p.m. It consisted of a cup of tea or cocoa and two biscuits. Physical resistance was lowered: an epidemic of dysentery broke out.

In the main home such epidemics are common, in spite of daily fumigation and compulsory baths. The beds, each supplied with a mackintosh sheet and three black blankets, are packed shoulder to shoulder; inmates of both temporary shelter and short stay take their wretched meals together in a vast bare hall so cold that overcoats have to be worn; doorsteps of bread and margarine are eaten straight off the table without plates; there is no communal room for the mothers and no playroom for the children. The whole place, though brightly painted, has a deadly, grudging air; and the staff, for all their efforts to help each case, are handicapped by having to act as warders. For, here, mothers are expected to be out all day (though sometimes let off in the worst weather) looking for accommodation with those of their children who are too young for school; and it is admitted that they are frequently shouted at or even pushed out forcibly—"otherwise they'd just sit on their beds all day." It seems to be assumed that they don't want to leave this delightful asylum. In fact, it takes more than normal courage to set off, day after day, down the long, dank, evil-smelling street which leads, as far as a possible home is concerned, precisely nowhere. The best they can hope to find is the insecurity of a furnished room where a landlord accepting children is likely to charge extra rent or (an increasing racket) to demand payment in kind.

It is scandalous that the homeless are not treated at least as well as other refugees, and that the L.C.C. and other county councils should be driven to adopt so bankrupt a policy. But the real tragedy is that bricks do not rank with bombs. If they did, the housing shortage would be instantly tackled as a national emergency and we should hear no more about prohibitive cost. But, pipe dreams apart; the bugbear of cost should be challenged. Before we let ourselves believe that increased powers to evict are an economic necessity, and that eviction itself holds only imaginary terrors, an inquiry is needed into the relative cost of neglect: the existing, enormous, unproductive and, above all, avoidable expense to the Exchequer of disease, mental illness, delinquency, absenteeism, subsidised divorce, the care of children in institutions and the need for National Assistance. For that list is the story of homelessness, in its widest sense.

AUDREY HARVEY

"Oh monstrous!

But one half-pennyworth of bread"

. . . WAS ALL FALSTAFF had to accompany an 'intolerable deal of sack'. Prince Hal was justly shocked. Falstaff's was not an exemplary character. He kept late hours. He was not always strictly truthful. His values were confused; certainly he did not eat nearly enough bread.

Bread, say the scientists (and who are we to doubt them?) is an excellent food in itself. It could give us as much as three quarters of the energy that we—and our children—burn up in a day.[1] And it contains body building proteins and essential vitamins and minerals too.[2]

Those distinguished nutritional authorities Professor McCance and Dr. Widdowson say in a Special Report[1]: "Probably the most important finding concerns the high nutritive value of wheat in any of the forms customarily consumed by man". And that means bread. Another Panel of scientists and medical men under the Chairmanship of Professor Lord Cohen says: "Bread is the most important staple food in the British diet".[3]

So see that your family eats plenty of bread every day—good and fresh.

1. *Medical Research Council Special Report Series No. 287, published by H.M.S.O. 1951.*
2. *All flour must contain — per 100 grams of flour:* Iron—*not less than 1.65 milligrams.* Vitamin B_1—*not less than 0.24 milligrams.* Nicotinic Acid—*not less than 1.66 milligrams.*
3. *Report of the Panel on Composition and Nutritive Value of Flour, published by H.M.S.O. 1956.*

ISSUED BY THE FLOUR ADVISORY BUREAU
21 ARLINGTON STREET, LONDON, S.W.1

Communities Afloat

FOR some hours each week, a fighting aircraft is a community of the sky, dependent for its safety and welfare entirely on itself. If it is to survive, it must have rules, to be understood and obeyed—if necessary under threat of punishment, if possible under the compulsions of common sense. The isolation of a warship at sea is less obvious since so often she sails in convoy or as part of a squadron; but it is equally real. In terms of survival, the men who serve in her will find comfort from the ships ahead and astern; but in terms of living and working they are on their own, cut off by iron bounds from the safeguards and practices of the land as surely as if the land had ceased to exist.

This seamen's isolation lasts not for a few hours but for weeks, even months. In earlier days it could last for years; and such floating communities, even more than those of the sky, need special constitutions, safeguards peculiar to themselves. Yet, for centuries, warships had no constitution at all; and when constitutions were established they were often intolerably harsh or completely ignored by the officers.

In Elizabethan times, ship's companies were ruled by the whim of their captain, subject only to some vague and easily ignored generalities known as the "custom of the sea." The ships were little tyrannies in which a man like Sir Francis Drake could and did sentence men to death, simply because, in a council of war, they had critcised his plans of campaign. Even when first Cromwell, and later Charles II, gave the navy written constitutions, the seamen were little better off. Their articles of war allowed the death penalty for so many offences that Drake would hardly have noticed any limitation on his whims; and the alternative penalties, such as keel-hauling, which meant dragging a trussed offender under the ship from one side to the other, or drumming round the fleet, which meant rowing an offender round an anchorage and giving him a stated number of lashes in the sight of each ship's company in turn, were so severe that summary execution seemed merciful by comparison. Even when additional safeguards for the men were added, many officers ignored them. In Nelson's day, the lieutenant of one ship habitually came on board drunk and, for amusement, had unoffending seamen tied to the mast and lashed. Indeed in 1795 the ship's company of H.M.S. *Nassau* sent

a memorial to Admiralty. "The ill-usage we have on board this ship," said the memorial, "forced us to fly to your Lordships the same as a child to its father. It is almost impossible for us to put it down on paper as cruel as it really is, with flogging and abusing above humanity."

Their lordships ignored this and other memorials, even after the mutinies of the Nore and Spithead had shown that British seamen were beyond breaking point. As late as 1866, it was still considered sufficiently enlightened to limit the number of lashes a seaman should receive at one time to 40. Nor, on paper, have improvements moved much faster since. The new Naval Discipline Bill, which proposes to abolish the death penalty as a *mandatory* punishment for a whole series of naval offences and to permit it—as a maximum penalty—only for specific offences committed with intent to assist the enemy, is the first substantial change in the law since 1866. But, of course, in the interval, naval practice, as opposed to naval written law, has changed beyond recognition.

These changes, in part, are due to the influx during two world wars of large numbers of civilians who jibbed at rules to which their active service colleagues had become hardened. They are due, in part, to social and political changes ashore which have compelled the navy to adjust itself to more modern practice. Both officers and men in recent years have been better educated than their predecessors both in the rights and in the duties of human beings. An increased sense of responsibility on the part of ratings has combined with an increased sense of the virtues of tolerance on the part of officers to make rigid and repressive codes of discipline not merely unnecessary but actively harmful.

There are still a few knaves and a few more fools at sea. The new bill retains powers to deal with such. But such men apart, seamen today maintain their discipline, not through the written and rigidly applied rules, but by the community compulsions to which they themselves contribute. At sea, thieving is a particularly serious offence. In the confinement of a mess deck it makes every man suspicious of his neighbour and can break the spirit of a whole ship's company. It used to be punished by death. The official punishment is still heavy. But it is not the official punishment which has checked thieving. Rather it is the prospective thief's own consciousness that at sea thieving will not do, and even more his knowledge that if caught he will be dealt with, not according to "the book," but by his own messmates. Early this century a certain thief at sea was caught redhanded. He was warned by his messmates. He was caught a second time; but there was no second warning. When, that night he was asleep in his hammock, he was stunned by a blow on the head, put inside a heavy wash-deck locker, which for drainage purposes has open bars for a bottom, and thrown into the sea. Even though he would not meet such a fate today, the prospective thief knows that, if they catch him, his messmates will make his life intolerable.

Because at sea there is such strong public feeling against thieves and because any gambler who loses heavily may be tempted to thieve, gambling, except for the licensed Tombola, is strictly forbidden and heavily punished. But again it is not the official penalties but the compulsions of the community which keep Crown and Anchor down to such a furtive minimum.

But even these compulsions would not operate unless the official laws were applied reasonably. The official law says that no one in the duty watch may leave his post. But the leading seaman says from time to time that someone from that watch

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can go below to make cocoa. Strictly this should mean that the leading seaman is at once disrated. All it, in fact, means is that the duty watch is kept warm by the cocoa—and the more ready to do its full duty when necessary. The official law says that every man who "draws" must drink his tot at mid-day and not store it. The reason, of course, is to prevent seamen from storing up enough to make themselves drunk and incapable. But the first lieutenant knows that mid-day is not the only time in the Arctic when a man can be cold or frightened and that Nelson did not reserve his blind eye only for orders which were fundamentally stupid; and on the whole, because seamen know that a man who is absent from his post or drunk when action comes will endanger everybody, few abuse this tolerance.

The changes now proposed in the Naval Discipline Act are good in themselves. They bring the paper constitution of the navy into line with modern thought. As such they are tidy. But in practice they will make little difference. For the navy, more and more, is going back to its earliest practice, the custom of the sea; but going back to it with greater common sense and far greater tolerance than was possible in earlier centuries. Going back? In a real sense it is going ahead of communities ashore. A great deal has yet to be done about pay and conditions. Opportunities for promotion from the lower deck are still far too limited. A sense of injustice still lingers around these questions and produces not merely sailor's "drips" but, from time to time, serious complaint and yet, beyond and above all complaints, the basic facts of a sailor's life at sea of themselves tend to produce a way of living which is increasingly agreeable. In a ship it is not possible to have any life at all if the men in her work against each other, shirk their duties or snatch more than their share. For the sake both of efficiency and of personal comfort they must work together. Because of this fact, because on the whole the navy still tends to attract the highest quality of recruit, and despite the still justifiable complaints about some aspects of the service, I would claim that a real sea-going ship's company today makes the relation of one human being to another more civilised than any other social organisation yet devised.

J. P. W. MALLALIEU

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BRANCHES AND AGENCIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

Fleet Street Notebook

MR. RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, who makes a habit—indeed almost a profession—of positive views has very positive ones indeed about the press. I do not share all these views, but I applaud their expression. I myself feel that Mr. Churchill concentrates almost too much of his fire on pornography and too little of it on other sins to which the popular—and sometimes the not so popular—press is prone. But he has two very great merits. He speaks his mind on this subject in terms which not even the least literate of mass circulation Sunday newspaper editors can well misunderstand. And he is not afraid to put rich newspaper proprietors in the dock, call out their names in a loud clear voice, and describe their activities in precise and detailed language.

In this he puts to shame those bishops, educationists and pillars of the Establishment who from time to time enjoy themselves denouncing the excesses of the popular press while cautiously avoiding any direct reference by name to those peers of the realm who profit so considerably from the activities they deplore. My Lords Rothermere and Kemsley, the proprietors of the *People*, the *News of the World*, and others concerned seem safe from them. They are not safe from Mr. Churchill, whose courage in such matters matches his lack of polite discretion. He deserves much public support for his campaign.

He does not, however, seem very likely to get it if Messrs. W. H. Smith & Co., the biggest newspaper and book distributors in the country, with a monopoly of a great deal of the brisk and valuable railway bookstall trade, have anything to do with it. Mr. Churchill has just gathered together three of his most forthright public lectures on the press, married them to a verbatim report of his successful libel action last October against Mr. Harry Ainsworth, editor of the *People*, and made the bundle into a book: *What I Said About the Press* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 7*s.* 6*d.*). This book W. H. Smith have refused to handle. They have even gone so far as to say that not only will they not display any copies on their bookstalls, but they will not even get it to order.

This seems to me to raise questions of the gravest public interest. It is true that the reason given by Smith's for their action is that they are advised by their lawyers that the book might be held to be defamatory. It is a fact that Mr. Churchill says some very harsh things about Lord Rothermere, Lord Kemsley, Mr. Ainsworth and others, and even about Sir William Haley. He also has some very strong criticism to make of W. H. Smith & Co. themselves, although this no doubt did not affect their decision either way. But it is also true and one would have thought highly relevant, that apart from the verbatim and privileged report of the libel case, all the three lectures included were delivered more than three years ago, between September 10 and November 19, 1953. All of them, moreover, have since been printed and published in one form or another before being gathered together in this present book. Finally, not only has no one brought any action for libel against Mr. Churchill following this earlier publication, but at no time since has he received any communication from anyone complaining that there was anything untrue or unwarranted in what he has said or written. Mr. Churchill himself has been advised by leading counsel that in view of this fact none of the people he has criticised could possibly proceed against him at this late stage even if anything he said about them could have been shown to be defamatory when he first said it in 1953.

But Smith's are uninterested. They have given their decision. They stick to it. And there is apparently no appeal against it. Since W. H. Smith undoubtedly distributed copies of all the newspapers which have recently been the subject of a series of notable libel actions—including Mr. Churchill's own—they may be thought a little unwise to make such a point of their legal responsibility for the reading matter they handle. What is much more important is that by their decision they have made it very difficult for Mr. Churchill's book to reach the public in any substantial quantity—especially so since many smaller distributors made aware of Smith's attitude feel that they must take the same line.

I by no means agree with everything that Mr. Churchill says in his book. I think he is in some instances guilty of language on the exaggerated side. But his main case is both well founded and important, and it seems to me a shocking thing that it should be made so very difficult for the ordinary reading public to hear it. Unless that is they are prepared, which I hope many will be, to write and order a copy direct from the publishers, who do not share Smith's legal anxieties, or from the company Mr. Churchill has himself formed to try to distribute his book so far as it is able: Country Bumpkins, Ltd., East Bergholt, Suffolk.

What else, if anything, can be done? Apparently very little. Smith's monopoly of a very large slice of the railway bookstall trade has on previous occasions been criticised on other grounds. It means in fact that they virtually hold in their hands the fate of many smaller magazines—including, of course, new ones—which have little hope of achieving an economic sales position if Smith's, for any reason, are unwilling to stock adequate supplies. This is a situation which cannot help but raise the question whether any concern, however generally well conducted, ought to be in a position to exercise such power. Is there not in fact a strong case for more competition especially in sites owned by a nationalised industry?

It is obvious that British Railways cannot dictate to those who lease sites under contract how they should run their business. But should it grant exclusive contracts? And with the position as it is at present ought the Monopolies Commission to be prepared to investigate complaints if there are any? To this the answer is that the Monopolies Commission can act only if requested to do so by the Board of Trade; and the Board of Trade, for its part, cannot under the Monopolies Acts ask the Commission to look into the operations of particular firms, but only into those of an industry as a whole. That means, in this instance, the sale of all books and newspapers. Which in turn means that nothing can be done about Smith's railway monopoly—except to make it conditional on their accepting the obligations of a "common carrier."

So there we are. Mr. Churchill criticises news-

papers and their owners. These criticisms are of public interest. But the largest distributor of the newspapers concerned prevents his criticisms from reaching the public—and no one can do anything about it. This seems to me a highly unsatisfactory situation and to raise principles to which Parliament might well pay some attention. Meanwhile this particular matter has been referred to the Press Council. It came before its General Purposes Committee on Tuesday. But here again I have to report a very odd situation. The General Purposes Committee decides whether complaints made are sufficiently well founded to go to the Council, which meets next month. But when Mr. Churchill asked after the meeting what decision had been taken he was refused any information. And when I rang up the Press Council I was similarly refused information as to whether the case was or was not to be reported to the Council. It seems to me very obvious that it should be and I find it hard to understand why there should be this secrecy. I hope it does not mean that the Press Council is getting ready to opt out of something which is important both to journalists and their readers.

FRANCIS WILLIAMS

The Arts and Entertainment

Ineloquent Englishman

GEORGE STUBBS was a great artist of the select company of the ineloquent; and Mr. Basil Taylor, in the introduction to his exemplary catalogue of the current Stubbs exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, quotes Berenson with great aptness to the effect that the creations of such artists remain "mute, with no urgent communication to make and no thought of rousing us with look and gesture. . . . It is enough that they exist in themselves." This attribute in Stubbs explains both his greatness and his neglect, for, while ineloquence is among the loftiest of those conditions to which the visual arts may aspire, it is also the least glamorous. It motivates strongly against summary success with the public because, being inexpressive, it is undemonstrative, and, if in English art it is of all qualities the rarest, it accords paradoxically with just that natural reticence which in social conduct the British rate so highly.

The irony of the situation has been that everything about Stubbs has assisted in hiding his glowing light under a bushel of cattle cake. Here is an artist whose portraits rank at least with those of Philippe de Champagne, whose modelling of forms matches that of Zurbaran and whose sense of the properly disposed silhouette surpasses Seurat's *and he is called George Stubbs*—the very name is redolent of turf and prize ring, it suggests things bucolic, bluff and blunt, the honest fellow touching his forelock to the Whig gentry who employed him and whose descendants own his pictures today. And he was a horse painter, placed squarely in Philistine territory by this accident, his art admired for equine virtues by persons of breeding totally unconcerned with admiring it from any other point of view. Into the gun-room went the art of Stubbs for reasons at once perfectly comprehensible but as absurd as those which—grotesque hypothesis—might confine the art of Degas to the stalls bar of an opera house. From this modest servitude Stubbs now emerges, but the extent to which he has been kept below stairs may be measured by the number of masterpieces contained in this superb exhibition which have never been shown in London before; and Stubbs died in 1806.

Stubbs was out of fashion before he died, his limpid, rational vision eclipsed by the surging confusion of the Romantic era and it is a further irony that whilst his work could hardly find favour in this country with persons bedazzled by Turner's glittering spume or bemused by Fuseli's dark eccentricities, it could hardly have failed across the Channel to delight David and his classical followers and Géricault no less. But it gathered dust instead upon the gun-room wall because ineloquent art does not advertise itself and Stubbs died shortly after the artist in general began to find it imperative to advertise *himself* in his art, a trend which has been increasing ever since. Stubbs was probably aware of this for his attempts at rhetoric, such as the pictures of lions attacking horses, fail in just this cause. They, like his "history pictures", sought to comply with a mode for which his talents were not suited and in some degree he betrayed his crystal-clear intelligence in attempting them, but then as now intelligence had become suspect, seeming among the *cognoscenti* to indicate a lack of feeling, an insensitive and improper use of the mind, that stalwart enemy of romance.

Stubbs, like Uccello and Seurat, bound art and science together into a single implement and all three seem to share a certain common tendency towards that relief style which, deriving originally from Greece by way of Greco-Roman carving on sarcophagi, so profoundly influenced the sculpture and painting of the Renaissance. Furthermore, Stubbs was also concerned with pictorial geometry and, like Leonardo, with profound anatomical studies. It is very hard, therefore, to credit Ozias Humphry's report that Stubbs went to Rome only to prove to himself that nature was superior to art, returning unaffected by what he had seen. He is clearly as remote from the intuitive *naturalism* thus implied as Rome is from Dedham Vale. The structure of his pictures, exquisitely calculated in terms of the exact placing of profiled forms in relation to one another, is the hallmark, shared with Uccello and Seurat, of the classical pictorial intellect in action; and how this extraordinary Liverpudlian came to join such company no one can say. But out of a horsebox scalpel in hand and no straws in the hair, has come George Stubbs, one hundred and fifty years overdue, a master and the one great classical painter we have produced. Without such dedicated picklocks as Mr. Basil Taylor, he would be in there yet, for he would never have raised his voice in the matter.

MICHAEL AYRTON

My Goodness, My Method

THIS week London has been extending the warmest of welcomes to Mme Edwige Feuillère and her company who will still be at the Palace for the next two weeks. And those who complain, whether critics or managers, about the torpid state of theatre audiences might well take note that a French actress can fill so large a theatre as the Palace with plays in French, and that it is now difficult, indeed, verging on the impossible, to get seats for the toughest of her offerings, *Phèdre*. This is to be the highlight of her season for Mme Feuillère has not before essayed the role in this play which is regarded as the supreme test for a French tragedienne. So far she has given us *La Dame Aux Camélias* and Becque's light comedy *La Parisienne*.

La Dame is the same production which so delighted her admirers two years ago. Personally I must confess to finding this a good deal less exciting than others do. While the storm of the period melodrama creaks and crackles all about her, Mme Feuillère gently, genteely almost, sways in a little private pocket of light airs. It is all graceful, subdued, delicate, refined, miniscule, finely done in its small compass. But how small, for this kind of play, can the compass reasonably be? *La Parisienne* is nothing more than a first-class Noel Coward of its day. Mme Feuillère has

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the technique for this butterfly acting at her very expressive finger tips. It is all as light and gauzy and airy as we could wish. A capital performance, and, if she hasn't the robustness for the Peruvian frolic by Mérimée which completed the programme, the mastery she had established in the Becque almost carried over to convince us that she had. The thumping melodrama and the charming piece of gossamer have not yet really tested this delightful and charming actress.

There could hardly be a more complete contrast than that between the really rather old-fashioned, plain productions of this French company at the Palace and Mr. Sam Wanamaker's immensely stylish one of *A Hatful of Rain* by Michael V. Gazzo at the Prince's. Mr. Wanamaker is the Ambassador Extraordinary in England of "The Method", that Stanislavsky-derived technique for bringing realism to its highest pitch of intensity which rules in the States. And this production well illustrates, I think, both the virtues and the defects of this technique. The virtues can be easily summed up. *A Hatful of Rain* is in itself a rather simple, rather crude, decidedly sentimental melodrama about drug addiction, set in New York. But it comes through The Method treatment decidedly enlarged. It makes an undeniable impact: it is extremely impressive. If the play itself were only a little better, it might get away with being treated very seriously. But it is the method, not the play, which is largely impressing us.

The material is particularly suitable for the full treatment. The action takes place in a flat lying just underneath that very noisy overhead railway. So a grand Jo Mielziner set (this one is by Stanley Moore), a kitchen sitting room floated in the great cyclorama of lowering tenements with the railway lines sweeping directly above it. Iron steps lead out of the flat where the visiting villains will prowl: inside, the young wife, pregnant but still going out to work: her husband Johnny out of a job and a dope-addict: his elder brother, Polo, chucker-out in a low night club: and the father of the two boys—derived straight from *Death of a Salesman*—one of those dotingly affectionate fathers who, having neglected the boys in childhood, thinks they now owe him all their devotion in return. We have first to accept the improbability that the wife doesn't know that her young husband is a "junkie": she only knows that he seems hardly "there" at all, and frequently spends unexplained nights away. She suspects another woman. This is only one of the improbabilities we must swallow. Indeed, what The Method does, exactly, is to make the detail so intensely "real" that we are to be spoofed into overlooking the improbabilities. When—favourite scene in contemporary American drama—the father is declaiming his love for his errant younger son, watch how the producer screens from us the embarrassments of this cliché-sodden passage by the eduction of tiny vivid details of behaviour from the actor (Bonar Colleano). It is less difficult, no doubt, for so fine a performer as Mr. Colleano makes himself in this play to simulate the rictus and the spasm of a deprived addict—devastatingly convincing as this is. But watch him or Mr. Wanamaker himself in the dangerous scenes or in the seemingly unimportant ones and you will see The Method working to fine effect. The actors (almost unaided by their author) supply from the inside a complete specification of their characters' appearance and behaviour listed second by second, and this from the outside adds up to a conviction. Our eyes believe what we see. There is a total consistency of action, even in characters who are mere pasteboard.

There is a drawback, of course. So much patient and laborious imaginative effort has gone into making the truth of these actions that evidently Mr. Wanamaker cannot bear to see any of it go. Scenes that might have taken five seconds in the reading may take up to five minutes in the playing. The slowness is not exactly boring: we are as absorbed as actor and producer are by the application of tiny detail on tiny detail which we feel, too, to be true. But when we emerge to analyse it, it hasn't all been worth it for the time taken. Mr. Wanamaker is too absorbed in his own search for truth to remember the audience and its needs. Take, for instance, the little band of dopy dope-peddlars, "Mother" and "Chuch" and "Apples", who are milking Johnny and his brother to the last cent of their savings under threat of coshes and bicycle chains. They are excellently placed, until the last act when their menacing arrival and a couple of telephone calls are drawn out into a long, horrific dream sequence. But when as in this case the horrific isn't quite achieved, we're left on the very wrong side of tedium. There are one or two other misjudgments in the production all derived from The Method's passion for truth—like the noises of the trains, the airliners, the road drills which, because they have to cease arbitrarily if we are to be allowed to get on with the play, don't after all seem true at all. But in spite of these, the production is a little triumph for The Method. It rams itself home to us not because of, but in spite of, the crudity of its action: it is the actors—and I must add to Mr. Colleano and Mr. Wanamaker himself, Miss Sally Ann Howes—who carry us by storm and the storm is the passion of their conviction in their characters' actuality. This brings the play on to the level of the best sort of tough American movie, *Waterfront*, and so on.

I have left myself little space to congratulate the Old Vic on a very passable attempt at *Antony and Cleopatra*. I always approach performances of this, the sublimest of all the Works, with trepidation, and the more so when in the hands of a young company who cannot, by definition, succeed. Mr. Robert Helpmann's sensible, straightforward if rather ill-cut production carries steadily forward. Leon Gluckman the Octavius Cæsar, Derek Godfrey the Enobarbus, Keith Michell come out of it well. Miss Margaret Whiting dies with dignity. But I must offer one urgent piece of advice to Mr. Michell. His voice is coming more and more from the throat instead of the diaphragm and this is causing him to give a crooner's rather than a singer's performance—sweet instead of strong.

T. C. WORSLEY

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HODDER AND STOUGHTON

The Serial Universe

RATHER to my surprise—for it began uncertainly and sometimes seems in danger of sinking in a welter of clichés—the Associated TeleVision network serial, *Emergency-Ward* 10, is turning into one of the best of the regulars, and there is no good reason why it should not run for years. It shows life in a hospital with, I think, fair authenticity: the characters are somewhat crudely drawn stock types, but the quasi-documentary background and incidents carry them without too great a strain. Some probationer nurses in real life probably do break the rules and stay out too late. ("But however did you get back?" "He's got a Mark VII—goes like a bomb.") Some ward sisters, as everyone who's been in hospital knows, are dictators who would say of a patient: "Tell him I can see his cigarette from here—he'd better have it out by the time I get to him." The young doctors talk just as they talk if one ever runs into an overflow from a hospital Rugby club dinner—and their badinage is stiffened by topical allusions. (Last Monday night one of them said: "Tomorrow the BMA meet the Prime Minister.")

One advantage that its formula gives this serial over serials dealing with daily life in people's homes is that probability does not have to be stretched to accommodate the frequent occurrence of tragedy. When awful things keep on happening to *The Grove Family*—when escaped "criminal lunatics" break in and threaten Gran and Mrs. Grove, and one crisis after another shatters the tranquillity of that drearily conventional middle-class household—one's credulity is overworked: such illusion as there is breaks down, and one suspects that the authors are beginning to realise that a true record of the daily life of such people would be intolerably dull, and are imitating the publicity technique which has served *The Archers* so well. But incidents of violence and horror are not once-in-a-lifetime rarities in a hospital. So, this week, it seemed natural enough that Nurse Pat Roberts, on her first night-duty in the emergency ward, should have to look after a teddy-boy who had pinched a car and had a bad smash, and that he should try to escape after an uncomfortable interrogation by the police. (But I thought she panicked rather too hysterically.) The dialogue between the police inspector and the house surgeon was corny but, again, true to life: "All this time and care and good money and hospital space wasted on a young criminal who's . . ." etc. "While he's in here, he's a patient."

Moreover, the best propaganda is indirect. When an episode in a domestic series is devoted to some such socially useful theme as road safety or the exposure of the bogus auction racket, that episode is apt to seem unduly contrived: you can almost hear the public relations officers getting

APOLOGY

Last week Tom Driberg in his column suggested that Mr. Woodrow Wyatt was employed by the B.B.C. to secure in his interviews "the answers that the Establishment—and especially the B.B.C. authorities and the Conservative Government—desire to have transmitted into millions of homes." He described this as an important propaganda task. Also Tom Driberg implied that Mr. Wyatt might be contemplating resignation from the Labour Party. These suggestions are absurd and untrue. Both the *New Statesman* and Tom Driberg withdraw them and apologise for having made them.

together to plan it. But *Emergency-Ward 10*, without over-glamourising what goes on in wards and operating theatre and nurses' and doctors' rooms, does do a steady unobtrusive public-relations job for the hospital service. As that fine actor, Mr. Dirk Bogarde, said in a TV interview of his *Doctor* series of films, it does at least show that medical people are human beings, not cold-blooded clinicians.

Nor, in quality, does it vary so unpredictably as, e.g., *Yes, It's the Cathode-ray Tube Show* (now just called *Yes It's*); though, admittedly, it is much harder to be consistently funny than consistently anything else. After its disappointing start, this Sellers-Bentine mixture of slapstick and satire improved considerably: last week I thought its first half superb, its second half laboriously unamusing; this week it was good right through—the best item in it being the parody of the TV gardening expert (homespun manner, Loamshire accent) demonstrating the extermination of a rogue snail with an artificial decoy snail (female) and a snail-lure that imitated her mating cry (silent).

One of the most admirable of the Third Programme's policies is its deliberate repetitiveness. Almost every important item or series seems to crop up again, sometimes many months after its first performance. This is useful to writers and talkers, since it makes possible a fee somewhat above the BBC's usual meagre standard. It is useful to critics and other listeners, since one can miss a programme in the reasonable hope of hearing it later on. I heard only the repeat, for instance, of Henry Green's contribution to the series, *Unfinished Novel*. (This is an unexpected and ingenious idea—who would have thought that so many unfinished novels by eminent writers were buried in desks?) The fragments from Mr. Green's novel that we heard—his vivid description of the black-clad, iridescent-skinned mother—made me regret his decision to put it aside. He himself admitted that he "still quite liked" some of it. But he had felt a fatal lack of animation in his own writing: "I could not go on." Regret must be tempered by admiration for so self-critical an act of abortion.

TOM DRIBERG

Lone Wolf

I MET Wyndham Lewis first in 1917. We were both in the Army and I cannot remember now how we both managed to be in London together, but from the Front I had been plotting, with Frank Rutter, the founding of a new periodical, and we had naturally thought of Lewis as a contributor. He exhibited from the first his characteristic cageyness, but he gave us one of his war drawings to reproduce and later made a design for the cover. One day I showed him a war poem that I intended to publish in the second number of *Art and Letters*, as this periodical was called. "Take out all those adjectives," he said, "and it will be a good poem." I followed his advice, then and ever afterwards.

Lewis might be said to have taken the adjectives out of life, for he hated all forms of qualification. I have never known anyone with whom it was so difficult to collaborate. Every meeting seemed like an act in some conspiracy. The difficulty began with the rendezvous, for he usually lived in two or three places at the same time, painting in one, writing in another, and presumably living a very undomestic life in a third. He liked good food and wine, but avoided fashionable restaurants. More often than not we met in an A.B.C. —with our backs to the wall.

When he projected *Tyro* he asked me to collaborate, which I did, but Lewis's projects never came to anything—he was incapable of teamwork, of any type of herding together. He preferred to fight alone, and naturally found it difficult to be editor, manager and sole contributor to the periodicals he established. He repudiated leadership and that is why it is so wrong to call him the "leader" or "founder" of the Vorticist Movement. He was the vortex, but it turned on itself.

One day the telephone rang and it was Lewis asking if I knew a certain critic who had reviewed one of his books in the *Criterion*. I replied that the critic in question was sitting in the next room (in the Victoria and Albert Museum). Could he come round and see him? Only wanted to *see* him. I suggested to Lewis that if he came round and rang the bell at the office door I would be there to let him in. He came immediately and when I opened the door he put his finger to his lips and the rest of the proceedings were in mime. I pointed to the room where my colleague was busy writing and Lewis tip-toed over to the open door, took a good look, and tip-toed out again. A trivial incident, but typical.

One day I met him on the underground platform at Piccadilly Circus. He had just finished writing *One Way Song* and was literally dancing with delight. "I never knew verse-writing was so easy," he said, "merely putting one foot after another. I could go on for ever."

He says of someone (the philosopher Bosanquet, in *Time and Western Man*) that he had "the vice of mildness." I had the same vice, so I was never destined to share Lewis's virtues. But he came as a powerful stimulus to me at a very impressionable age, and I have always been grateful to him for the corrective he supplied to a native romanticism. But he could not change a hedgehog into a fox, to use Mr. Isaiah Berlin's metaphor. When I first met him he was a bombardier and I as an infantryman in the trenches had recently suffered more from our own guns than from the enemy's. Our relative positions did not change in civil life and I had always the uneasy feeling that any day I might be shot in the back.

HERBERT READ

Ordeal

THIS is one of the things, like the female bust line, no cinema-goer can have too much of. He must be run over by trains, jostled by elks, machine-gunned here, introduced to the campus there. A couple of weeks ago he underwent Hitchcock's *The Wrong Man*; and who on that occasion could go away without the conviction; this sort of thing is waiting round the corner for *me*? A doleful double-bass, you may remember, was mistaken for a hold-up man; and if that could happen (as it did, we were assured, in fact), then no one could consider himself safe.

This week's ordeals are neither so contagious nor, as a result, so titivating. Not that in idea they shirk panic. I shouldn't choose to fly in an airliner in which a maniac had just shot both pilots, or to be dumped in an overcrowded lifeboat 1,500 miles from land. But do *Julie* and *Seven Waves Away* bring these extremities nearer? With the first, to be seen at the London Pavilion, the answer is, No. We don't grip our seats. We shan't suffer nightmare. The next time we travel by air no man with staring eyes sheltering behind a newspaper will disturb us. The trouble with *Julie* is that, long before the air spree, we have suffered all that human nature can and come out on the sunny side.

In the first minute a jealous husband has pressed his wife's foot on the accelerator and they have gone whirling round mountain sides before he relents and says casually, "I shouldn't have done that." But this is only the beginning. They live in a house on a cliff top, and he very soon reveals himself as one of those pianists of storm and drip: his two hands scrabble away on the bottom octave, and his wife sighs "There's something disturbing about your music today." Then he reveals that he murdered her late husband; but after the piano playing, this seems a mere peccadillo. He will murder *her*. It is—goodness knows what she's doing here—little freckled Miss Doris Day. She flees to San Francisco; the hotel bedroom telephone rings; she lifts the receiver to hear over long distance that dreadful music poured forth. When two policemen guard her, it roars up out of the night, from a car with a recording machine. *Julie* has the advantage of being progressively funny; but it will be understood that by the time of the aerobatics it's far too late to think of seriously scaring us. As has happened before at the Pavilion we may yearn for a more endemic film just going off—*The Creature Walks Among Us*.

Seven Waves Away (Marble Arch Odeon) is grimmer. A liner strikes an old mine, with all drowned except twenty-seven. They are far too many for the one lifeboat afloat, and the ship's officer in charge has the difficult task of deciding whom to jettison. He picks the old, the ill, the weakly. This harsh decision has to be enforced at the pistol point. There's the expected storm, the remnant survive, with some chance of rowing their way to an Africa 1,500 miles off. Everyone thanks and congratulates the man who has saved them. Then a ship hoots through the mist, and on the point of rescue they all dissociate themselves from the abominable cruelties practised upon them by this tyrant. All, that's to say, except a couple of young women. It's a Maupassant twist; but unfortunately the whole story, despite doses of realism, has never stirred but only lain heavy on the imagination. As lifeboat films go it is faithful, clenched, but a bit dull; Tyrone Power works hard as the ship's officer, but doesn't grow enough beard; the most touching moments come from Marie Lohr as a jettisoned opera singer, and Lloyd Nolan whose suicide dive starts the weeding-out process. However, we are disturbed if not nervously entertained.

The Good Companions has become, at Warner's, a musical, something between dumpling and peach flan, and while I don't know what fans it aims at, Priestley ones or musical ones, I'm inclined to vote it the worst ordeal of three.

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WHAT IS BRITISH SOCIALISM?

SIR,—We all enjoyed the spectacle of the nimble John Strachey in your last issue knocking down slow-moving American professors but, as he says, there is a real issue behind all this verbal stuff and, as between Englishmen, I think he dodges it.

He starts by falling into the Communist error that "right" and "wrong" are merely the "expedient" or (applicable), and the "inexpedient" (or inapplicable). If the development of capitalist society is upwards—towards a better standard of living, etc. —the reformist attitude is applicable; if it is downwards—towards crisis and catastrophe—the revolutionary attitude is applicable. Today the position is clear, he says. Any Socialist who is not a reformist ought to have his head examined. Now in the Thirties, he admits, the choice was not so obvious. Precisely.

The intellectual Left at that time—and Strachey spoke so eloquently for it—was convinced that capitalist society was rushing towards catastrophe. So it adopted the revolutionary attitude and insisted that the Labour Party should insert in all its manifestoes (including 1945) the Marxian revolutionary axiom—the socialisation of *all* the means of production and distribution. The majority of the Labour Party was always reformist and never revolutionary, but agreed to admit this revolutionary doctrine in order to placate its intellectuals. The old trade unionists always knew that it was impossible to persuade a capitalist to hand over *all* his property to the state—except at the point of a gun. This explains why the Labour Party, having won what was on paper a revolutionary mandate in 1945, adopted nevertheless the reformist, not the revolutionary, attitude.

I do not suggest that John Strachey attempted in his article, "An Insular View," to evade the lesson of all this past history, but I want to make this very insular point. Those of us in the early Thirties who followed Keynes and, while attacking the abuses and inefficiencies of the capitalist system, always believed that it could be reformed, were often scorned by the intellectual Left because we refused to be revolutionaries. Is it not time to admit that we had a better definition of what is "right" and what is "wrong"? And is it fair or wise to suggest that the Labour Party, or British Socialists, today merely adopt a reformist attitude because it happens to be expedient? NICHOLAS DAVENPORT

The Athenæum.

SIR,—As a foreigner who has been almost two years in this country doing some research in sociology, I am struck by Professor Homan's rather simplistic idea of what a political party should be. He points out the apparent logical contradiction of having in the same party a mixture of idealists, theorists and practical politicians. He seems to dispose of this fact by equating it to the organisation of the church, which includes monks as well as worldly bishops. But I should think that precisely one of the main functions of a political party is to unite the various specialists of our complex society and produce a creative interaction among them.

I am quite aware that this interaction takes place in any society, both within and outside political parties. But I venture to say that the Labour Party, in spite of its logical contradictions, provides much better channels for the dissemination of the principles of Socialism than any other organisation that I am aware of on either side of the Atlantic. It is due to this fact that many people all over the world—and I may include here Latin America, from where I come —look up for inspiration to the Labour Party rather than to the political machines of the United States.

TORCUATO S. DI TELLA

59 Netherall Gardens, N.W.3.

PORTUGAL

SIR,—I shall refrain from commenting on all Kingsley Martin's strictures on Portugal's internal affairs. By now countless people from this country have visited Portugal during the last 25 years, and they are well placed to form their own judgment.

Your article, however, contains a number of tendentious and totally untrue statements regarding the Portuguese position during the last war, and these most certainly call for correction.

You write:

> He (Dr. Salazar) was most unwilling to allow the allies to set up bases on the Azores; Winston Churchill speaks of Anthony Eden's remarkable "patience" in this matter. In the end Salazar gave way to pressure from the United States—which was tactfully exercised through Brazil.

In the notes which were exchanged between the Portuguese and British governments in June, 1943, and which resulted in the grant to Great Britain, at a dark moment in the Battle of the Atlantic, of air and naval facilities in the Azores, it was expressly stated that these facilities were being given in consequence of Britain's having invoked the alliance. The aerodrome at Lagens, on the Island of Terceira, was ready for operating general reconnaissance aircraft by Britain.

Subsequently, it was the British government themselves who impressed upon the Portuguese government the need to lend support to the American air force by allowing them to use the new aerodrome on the island of Santa Maria, which Portugal was rapidly and efficiently completing. There being no treaty of alliance with the United States, negotiations were entered into between Lisbon and Washington leading to the agreement of November 28, 1944. Arising out of this agreement—

1. Portugal received the formal guarantee of the United States for the restoration to full Portuguese sovereignty of those of her territories violently occupied by the Japanese during the war in the Pacific.

2. The United States were given the use of the new aerodrome of Santa Maria until the end of the war.

All the documents relating to these negotiations were made public, and they entirely contradict your version of the facts, of their background and even of their order of sequence.

As for the policy of Portugal prior to the grant of facilities in the Azores, you quote Winston Churchill's reference to Anthony Eden's "patience," but I note that you refrain from reminding your readers of the then Prime Minister's announcement in the House of Commons on October 12, 1943, when he said, after citing the various treaties between the two countries:

> This engagement has lasted now for nearly six hundred years, and is without parallel in world history. I have now to announce its latest application. At the outset of the war the Portuguese government, in full agreement with His Majesty's government in the United Kingdom, adopted a policy of neutrality with a view to preventing the war spreading into the Iberian peninsula. The Portuguese government have repeatedly stated, most recently in Dr. Salazar's speech of April 27, that the above policy is in no way inconsistent with the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, which was reaffirmed by the Portuguese government in the early days of the war.
>
> His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, basing themselves upon this ancient alliance, have now requested the Portuguese government to accord them certain facilities in the Azores which will enable better protection to be provided for merchant shipping in the Atlantic. The Portuguese government have agreed to grant this request, and arrangements, which enter into force immediately, have been concluded between the two governments regarding the conditions governing the use of the above facilities by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and British assistance in furnishing essential material and supplies to the Portuguese armed forces and the maintenance of the Portuguese national economy. The agreement concerning the use of facilities in the Azores is of a temporary nature only, and in no way prejudices the maintenance of Portuguese sovereignty over Portuguese territory.

A. POTIER
Press Attaché.

Embaixada de Portugal em Londres.

LABOUR AND THE CO-OPS

SIR,—Your suggestion which "would put them (the Co-ops) in the same relationship to the Labour Party as the trade unions," does not offer a likely basis for a new agreement. It does not accord with what is practicable—leaving aside the question of merit—within the Co-operative movement.

Since the war I have attended almost all Co-operative Congresses and annual conferences of the Co-operative Party. There were two outstanding occasions when two delegations, and their resolutions, were overwhelmingly out of touch with the general spirit of the Co-operative movement. One was at Congress when a Leeds delegation tried to end the link between the Co-operative and Labour movements. They were laughed off the rostrum. The other was at a Co-operative Party conference when a delegation from the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society advocated national affiliation to the Labour Party on the R.A.C.S. pattern. That delegation was listened to with respect but their proposals were overwhelmingly rejected.

There is no doubt, that is to say, that Co-operators wish the alliance with Labour to continue, but there is equally no doubt that they do not accept the R.A.C.S. arrangement as the means of continuing that alliance.

One essential point is missed by those who draw too simple an analogy with a trade union affiliation. The Co-operative movement is very diverse in its structure. The thousand retail societies are autonomous units. They are not branches of either the C.W.S. or the Co-operative Union. Their relationship with those bodies is not comparable with the relationship between a trade union branch and its national body or between a constituency Labour Party and the national party. Also there are separate national Co-operative organisations, the Guilds, the Co-operative Productive Federation, the Co-operative Press, and the British Federation of Young Co-operators. They all have their special jobs but they all subscribe to a common Co-operative faith. That faith has its political expression and it is necessary that there should be a common clearing-house of the political ideas of these varied organisations. The Co-operative Party has fulfilled that role successfully over forty years. If there are no special Co-operative

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political aims then there is no need to spend Co-operative money on politics at all.

That does not mean that there should not be a close working alliance between the Co-operative Party and the Labour Party as there has indeed been ever since the Cheltenham Agreement of 1927. It does not mean that that alliance cannot now, given mutual understanding, be made even closer; but it does mean that to fail to recognise the role of the Co-operative Party is to fail to know the British Co-operative movement itself.

Membership of the political section of the Co-operative Movement does not call into question one's loyalty to the Labour Party. Indeed, I do not know how one can be a Socialist without being a wholehearted political Co-operator as well, for Co-operation puts into practice an important part of one's Socialist beliefs. It is certainly true that Co-operative M.P.s are as loyal, useful and hard-working a group of members of the Parliamentary Labour Party as any other 20 M.P.s can claim to be.

House of Commons. A. E. ORAM

SIR,—In the comment on Labour and the Co-ops in your issue of March 9, it is stated that "The present discussions between the two organisations are not a sudden, new development; they have been going on informally for some months." May I point out that this is not the case. The first discussions will take place later this month. If, in the meantime, there have been any exchanges between individuals, nothing has been known of them by us and they could not accordingly be regarded in any sense as "discussions between the two organisations."

R. SOUTHERN,
General Secretary

Co-operative Union, Ltd.

HOUSE OF LORDS

SIR,—Mr. Tom Driberg seems ready to assume that any reform of composition which made the House of Lords more efficient, and gave it more prestige, would be accompanied by an increase in its powers. But surely there is no reason to fear this? However unpopular a government may be, it will not doom itself to certain extinction by enabling the House of Lords to suspend for a longer period bills which have been passed by the House of Commons.

For my part I should be well content to see the Lords' suspensory power abolished altogether. The function of the second chamber in our parliament should be to revise legislation, *ad referendum* to the House of Commons, and to provide a forum where matters of interest can be debated by men—and women—who are not exposed, like our unfortunate M.P.s, to the worst effects of party discipline and electoral neurosis.

ALTRINCHAM

PARTITIONING CYPRUS

SIR,—Partition of Cyprus, far from being a solution to the problem, leads to further complications resulting in endless Greco-Turkish quarrels. Partition is a violation of unshakable historic data, of basic democratic and legal principles and of the present stark reality. The main reasons are the following:

(a) The Turks of Cyprus are not an indigenous population and consequently are not entitled to territorial claims on the island. Until 1571, when the Ottoman Empire seized Cyprus, no Turk ever inhabited the island, while Greeks were established there since over a thousand years B.C. Moreover, Turkey abandoned her claims on Cyprus through the Lausanne Treaty.

(b) The Turks of Cyprus have always been and still are the minority.

(c) The mass transfer of the population will be a

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tragedy. The compulsory transfer of populations has always been an inhuman act. It is like uprooting an old tree on the pretext of replanting it. Greeks and Turks live together in the same towns, same villages, same neighbourhoods. They have common economic interests. A mass transfer in the event of partition will mean financial ruin to the people involved and many years will be needed to remedy this injustice. Therefore, partition in addition will obviously cause the destruction of the foundations of the island's social and economic life. PHIDIAS DUKARIS
United Kingdom Secretary to the
Ethnarchy of Cyprus

21 Fitzroy Square,
W.1.

DICKENS AND DOSTOIEVSKI

SIR,—I must have made my point about Dostoievski and capital punishment more obscurely than I intended, or else Mr. Greene would not have misunderstood me. Of course capital punishment existed in 19th-century Russia, but only for political offences; of course Dostoievski was sentenced to death for his part in the Petrashevski group, and was reprieved while in sight of the firing squad; of course this left a mark on him—more humdrum men than Dostoievski would have found the circumstances disturbing—and there are traces of it scattered through his work, not only in the famous reflection in *The Idiot*.

My point was, however, something quite different. It was that there was no capital punishment for murder in Russia in Dostoievski's time. The normal punishment for murder was penal servitude, often for terms as short as eight years. Murder to a 19th-century Russian did not carry the shadow of the gallows. Dostoievski could therefore write about it and the emotions of murderers awaiting arrest, trial and verdict with surprising calmness, with none of the sadistic excitation of the nerves that he showed on so many other topics. I compared him in this respect with Dickens, who, as excitable as Dostoievski and morbidly aware of the hanging to which murderers were sent by the English penal code, wrote such scenes as Fagin's last night on earth.

199 Cromwell Road, S.W.5. C. P. SNOW

FARFALLA IN TEMPESTA

SIR,—In his review of Ezra Pound's *Rock-Drill*, Mr. Donald Davie comments on the line "farfalla in tempesta." "Farfalla is a real though rare and archaic word for 'moth.' With its beautiful hint of 'far-fallen' it expresses, tersely but as movingly as anything in the Pisan Cantos, Pound's compassion for those who cannot stand the pace."

May I submit that since two words in this line are in Italian, it is reasonable to presume that the third is also. "Farfalla" is the common or garden word for common or garden butterfly, and the line, being translated, simply means "Butterfly in storm." One's immense confidence in erudite analytic critical exposition is a little shaken when the "interpretation" appears to be pure fantasy attached to an elementary mistake. STEPHEN SPENDER

25 Haymarket, S.W.1.

THE EASTER LILY

SIR,—What I said in my review of *The Easter Lily* about Fascist tendencies in the I.R.A. was based on two very detailed pages of Mr. O'Callaghan's book, including a verbatim report of a conversation with an I.R.A. brigade-commandant who said that what Dublin needs today is "a fiery cross and a couple of niggers hanging from a lamp-post." It is for Mr. O'Callaghan to defend his own accuracy. A great Irish dramatist, Mr. Sean O'Casey, thinks his book a useful and informative one; and these particular pages rang all the more true to me because Mr. O'Callaghan described the race prejudice, xenophobia, and class prejudice of younger recruits to the I.R.A. without expressing any disapproval of them. The moral indignation was all mine.

One other point one ought to make. The legal execution, after trial, of rebels caught bearing arms, however tragic, is not "murder." But any killing today by the I.R.A. *is* murder, since the I.R.A. is neither a sovereign state, an instrument of a sovereign state, nor even an internationally recognised body of Irish insurgents. It has an actual existence but no legal existence, and therefore no moral standing.

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UNKINDEST CUTS

SIR,—T. C. Worsley writes: "There is no play of Shaw's that would not be improved by sensible cutting." I once saw G. B. S. himself cut a bit of *Back to Methusalah*. It was in 1938, when he was attending a rehearsal of the R.A.D.A. Having already undermined the producer's confidence by advising a minor character to stick firmly to centre-stage "and never mind what the producer tells you," he suddenly shouted indignantly from the stalls about some particular passage: "I never wrote that!" The book being produced in proof, he said it must be a pirate edition and demanded that the words in question be cut out!

Next morning, however, the inevitable postcard arrived with a new version of the offending passage, which was duly incorporated, so the cut wasn't very long lived. It makes one wonder, however, if Shaw very often saw or studied his plays later in life, and if he would not have altered quite a lot of them if he had? HENRY SPRY

38a Alma Square,
N.W.8.

ERNESTINE L. ROSE

SIR,—I am writing a biography of Mrs. Ernestine L. Rose (*née* Sijsmondi Potowski—1810-1892). Mrs. Rose, Polish Jew, Owenite, women's rights advocate, abolitionist, lecturer, free thinker, social reformer, lived in England from 1830-36 and again from 1869-1892.

I would appreciate hearing from anyone having letters, papers or other related material.

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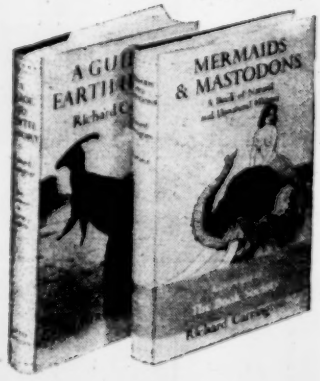

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Spring Books Supplement

NON, ALPHONSE, JAMAIS

THE world of poetry is fraught with misunderstanding. It is not my world, and when in it I tread warily. Even so, I have memories of many painful incidents. I once, with disastrous results, praised a poem by Cecil Day Lewis in the presence of a Younger Poet. On another occasion, I was able to put a second Younger Poet in touch with Mr. T. S. Eliot, whose terrible advice was: "Write in prose." When it is a question of cross-Channel appreciation, the confusion thickens. I can still see my French master, a passionate Yorkshireman, complaining with tears in his eyes that he had been insulted by the Science master, who had said that there was no such thing as French poetry. An almost exact counterpart to this occurred many years later in the B.B.C. European Service Canteen when an extremely subtle Frenchwoman, an *agrégée des lettres* into the bargain, invited me to confess, now that we were alone and speaking frankly, that English poetry was just a barbaric jumble of sound.

However, in Anglo-French relations, some progress towards politeness has been made since the nineteenth century when Landor, referring to the French nasal vowels, wrote that they were,

> the most disagreeable and disgusting of sounds, being produced by the same means as a stink is rejected, and thus reminding us of one . . .

and Michel Bréal declared, half-humorously, that the English language was *un jargon fixé trop tôt par l'écriture*. On the Anglo-American side, Swinburne and then Pound and Eliot, swung opinion round with such effect that, nowadays, only an unrepentant Philistine will profess indifference to French poetry. Studies on all aspects of French verse are constantly being written by English and American critics. Anthologies or editions of particular French poets, with translations of varying quality printed opposite the French texts, appear at frequent intervals. The most recent publication of this sort is Mr. Anthony Hartley's Penguin anthology of nineteenth-century French verse*, which consists, so the anthologist tells us, of poems that he himself likes.

My first duty, as a honest reviewer, is to say whether or not I like them. Honesty is the only helpful policy in this field; politeness, like prejudice, can confuse the issue. In studying English and American translations of French poetry, I have often been forced to the conclusion that the translator, in proclaiming his enthusiasm, must be suffering from a delusion or a snob emotion, because his translation showed that he had not grasped the point of the original. Such a criticism cannot, of course, be levelled at Mr. Hartley, whose introduction is sober and sensitive. (His translations are so austerely literal as to be sometimes misleading; e.g., *à pas de loup*, "with a wolf's tread," when it means no more than "stealthily.") If I disagree with him, it is because of my own insensitivity or because of a genuine difference in taste.

But as I read his book, misgivings crowd in. I feel myself becoming, like Paul Valéry when he visited a museum, *affreusement sincère*. I don't like the opening item, *Le Vieux Vagabond* by Béranger:

Dans ce fossé cessons de vivre.
Je finis vieux, infirme et las.
Les passants vont dire: Il est ivre;
Tant mieux! Ils ne me plaindront pas.

Here we have a third-rate versifier faggoting a rudimentary social conscience. And could anything be more chilling than Lamartine's *Elégie*:

Cueillons, cueillons la rose au matin de la vie;
Des rapides printemps respire au moins les fleurs;
Aux chastes voluptés abandonnons nos coeurs;
Aimons-nous sans mesure, ô mon unique amie!

Or more sententious than Musset's *Lettre à Lamartine*:

Non, Alphonse, jamais. La triste expérience
Nous apporte la cendre, et n'éteint pas le feu.
Tu respectes le mal fait par la Providence,
Tu le laisses passer et tu crois à ton Dieu.
Quel qu'il soit, c'est le mien; il n'est pas deux croyances.
Je ne sais pas son nom, j'ai regardé les cieux.
Je sais qu'ils sont à lui, je sais qu'ils sont immenses,
Et que l'immensité ne peut être à deux.

Or more thunderously empty than Hugo's *La Trompette du Jugement*:

Sa dimension vague, ineffable, spectrale,
Sortant de l'éternel, entrait dans l'absolu.
Pour pouvoir mesurer ce tube, il eût fallu
Prendre la toise au fond du rêve, et la coudée
Dans la profondeur trouble et sombre de l'idée;
Un de ses bouts touchait le bien, l'autre le mal;
Et sa longueur allait de l'homme à l'animal,
Quoiqu'on ne vît point là d'animal et point d'homme;
Couché sur terre, il eût joint Eden à Sodome.

Although this kind of bad poetry is more prevalent in France than in England, it is not its Frenchness I object to but its badness. Further, I can swear that those parts of French poetry I like mean just as much to me, and sometimes more than any English verse. I love those stinking French nasals; the velar "r" is a most voluptuous sound; the mute "e" allows all sorts of subtleties and elasticities; and the alexandrine, when properly handled, wears this world out to the ending doom rather better than most English lines. Perhaps through a wish to be representative, the anthologist has included some dead stalks instead of flowers. Some of his other choices I can agree with. Musset, in *Une Soirée Perdue*, writes in a completely different key the sort of poetry that looks like prose but isn't. Hugo, when he is actually expressing his human emotions and not trying to be the Almighty's speaking-tube, is often superb; *L'Expiation* can bring tears even to an anti-militaristic eye and *Booz Endormi*, in spite of its incredible jumble of local colour and the unconscious humour of some of its lines, is a flawed masterpiece at once comic and sublime.

In rejecting the kind of bad verse I have quoted, I am more or less in step with French critical opinion. Mr. Hartley says in his introduction that the English reader may find French rhetoric difficult to appreciate and that the important poets of the latter part of the century tried to react against it. I feel he does not sufficiently emphasise the revulsion against Romantic rhetoric which came to a climax just before the war in the arguments about *la poésie pure* centred around Valéry and the Abbé Brémond, in Gide's oft-quoted *Victor Hugo, hélas* and in Thierry Maulnier's *Introduction à la poésie française*, published in 1939. I see, on looking at Maulnier's anthology, that he includes only one line from *Booz Endormi* and classes *L'Expiation* among the *déclamations insupportables*. Any English reader, then, who thumbed disgustedly through the first half of Mr. Hartley's anthology, could perhaps flatter himself that he was coinciding with M. Maulnier.

Yet a distinction has to be made between good and bad rhetoric. In the quotation given above, Musset is just booming away about a distinguished subject, using the rhetorical vocabulary and repetitions without a tremor of metaphysical emotion. But when he writes in *Une Soirée Perdue*:

J'étais seul, l'autre soir, au Théâtre Français,
Ou presque seul; l'auteur n'avait pas grand succès.
Ce n'était que Molière, et nous savons de reste
Que ce grand maladroit, qui fit un jour Alceste,
Ignora le bel art de chatouiller l'esprit
Et de servir à point un dénouement bien cuit . . .

the rhetoric fits the emotion and the sinewy, Molièresque lines feel solid and supple in the mouth. Similarly, Hugo's trumpetings in *La Trompette* are as indefinite as the void itself, but the hysterical crescendo and sobbing diminuendo of *L'Expiation* express a simple, patriotic emotion with perfect virtuosity. How resilient are the lines:

Car ces derniers soldats de la dernière guerre
Furent grands; ils avaient vaincu toute la terre,
Chassé vingt rois, passé les Alpes et le Rhin,
Et leur âme chantait dans les clairons d'airain!

(And how effective, in the last, are the four splendid stinks.)

Poetry is a far more intermittent art than, say, music. It would be possible to go through Chénier, Lamartine, Hugo, etc.—and even Mallarmé and Valéry, in spite of their straining after total effectiveness—and point to those parts where the poet's eyes glaze over with automatism or where he begins to chew his words heavily, and the magic ebbs away. When, for instance, Baudelaire writes:

O soir, aimable soir, désiré par celui
Dont les bras, sans mentir, peuvent dire: Aujourd'hui
Nous avons travaillé!—C'est le soir qui soulage
Les esprits que dévore une douleur sauvage,
Le sâvant obstiné dont le front s'alourdit,
Et l'ouvrier courbé qui regagne son lit . . .

what are we to make of *ces bras qui parlent sans mentir*? A failed rhetorical personification, I should say. It may be a deliberately bathetic mixed metaphor, but this is unlikely in view of the humdrum nature of the following lines

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* *The Penguin Book of French Verse*, 3, *The Nineteenth Century*. Introduced and edited by ANTHONY HARTLEY. *Penguin*. 5s.

(unless, again, the shabbiness of the poetry is meant to indicate the shabbiness of fatigue) and the inappropriate simile, entirely dictated by the rhyme, in

Cependant des démons malsains dans
l'atmosphère
S'éveillent lourdement, comme des gens
d'affaire . . .

But somehow the impetus of *O soir, aimable soir* carries us over this dull patch to the next good line:

La Prostitution s'allume dans les rues.

Baudelaire, like Mallarmé and Valéry, oscillates between rhetoric and anti-rhetoric and achieves unity of tone only in his better poems. But it is very important to emphasise that in those poets who are openly and consistently rhetorical, their rhetoric, when it is really poetic, has an ordered and powerful beauty not to be found in less formal verse. There is nothing in English as sustained and subtle as Racine, or even Chénier at his best. And if Hugo had not written reams of emptiness, he might not have achieved, occasionally, sequences like the wonderful Section IV of *Le Sacre de la Femme*. Also, as Mr. Hartley acutely observes, the generalising tendency of the French tradition, which is an aspect of rhetoric, results in an intellectualised sensuousness of a kind which hardly exists in English. He might have added that this is truest of the "inverted rhetoricians," Mallarmé, Rimbaud and Valéry, whose exasperated fascination with language, only possible in a country of rhetoricians, produces some of its best effects almost on the verge of the unsayable.

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Top and Bottom People

Dangerous Estate. By FRANCIS WILLIAMS. *Longmans. 24s.*

Mr. Francis Williams always writes and talks with good sense about newspapers, journalism and journalists. His latest contribution to the subject is well up to standard. The first chapters provide an interesting and competent summary of the development of daily and Sunday newspapers, from their beginnings in the early part of the eighteenth century to Northcliffe's arrival on the scene. Thenceforth, he goes into greater detail, and (particularly in the case of Odhams and the *Daily Herald*, of which he was for a while editor) writes from first-hand knowledge and experience.

Fortunately, Mr. Williams is an enthusiast for journalism as such, quite apart from its social, moral or other implications. There is no suggestion that it is an inferior branch of letters, useful for earning money, but otherwise to be despised. This is a great relief. How tiresome is the assumption that any silly, pretentious novel or biography is more "important," more "significant," than what goes day by day and week by week into newspapers and periodicals. If the former may linger for some weeks or months on the shelves of public libraries, whereas the latter is honourably used to wrap fish the day after its appearance, both, with minute exceptions, disappear equally into oblivion. The memorable residue of any age is infinitesimal, and is as likely to have appeared periodically as between cloth boards—in this age, perhaps more so. To me, the prose style of Cassandra (Mr. William Connor) is decidedly more admirable than, for instance, that of Mr. T. S. Eliot; and Defoe's journalistic definition of "a perfect style of language" as "that in which a man speaking to five hundred people of all common and various capacities, idiots and lunatics excepted, should be understood by them all, "seems to me much to be preferred to those fabricated by Dr. Leavis and other portentous, and often largely incomprehensible pundits.

Mr. Williams rightly dismisses as ignorant and foolish the distinction in kind often made between "quality" newspapers like *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Manchester Guardian* and their popular counterparts like the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Express*. As he shows, what has happened has been that, owing to public education and other social changes, new layers of potential newspaper readers have arisen with new tastes and interests. Northcliffe was able to grow rich and powerful by catering for these because his more serious competitors like Morley and Spender refused to have anything to do with them: "he harnessed," Mr. Williams writes, "he did not create, the social forces that made him."

Later on, the same thing happened with the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sunday Pictorial*. Their vast circulations have been built up by satisfying in a lively, uninhibited way the newspaper requirements of a formerly submerged section of the population who are now earning good money, for the most part voting Labour, and generally basking in the Welfare State's artificial sunlight. This is no more reprehensible than, say, putting on *The Country Wife* because middle-class theatre audiences like their smut in Restoration costume. If *The Times*, as a recent advertising campaign suggests, provides the Top People with their newspaper reading, the *Daily Mirror* performs a like service for the Bottom People. There just happen to be more of the Bottom People.

This is not, of course, to say that there are no malpractices in journalism as in all other professions, but only that they do not lie in the particular idiom which a newspaper's circumstances necessarily impose on it. I personally find the idiom of *The Times*, the *Observer* and the *Manchester Guardian* (in that order) decidedly repugnant. I should not, however, dream of therefore condemning them as newspapers. The Top People who read *The Times*, the Virtuous People who read the *Observer*, the Earnestly Thoughtful People who read the *Manchester Guardian*, like, and are perfectly entitled to have, their news so presented. But so are the readers of other newspapers who happen to prefer a bathing beauty to a fourth leader, gossip about film stars to a profile of Mr. Nehru, lurid coverage of crime to editorial exhortations.

Probably the most despicable episode in the history of British journalism was the systematic rigging of news in *The Times* by its editor, Geoffrey Dawson, in the interest of Chamberlain's appeasement policy. "I do my best night after night," Dawson wrote to one of his foreign correspondents, "to keep out of the paper anything that might hurt their [the Nazis'] susceptibilities." Almost as deplorable was the campaign carried on by Lord Beaverbrook right up to the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 to convince the public that peace was assured. Whereas, however, Dawson seems to have carried most of his staff with him, the great majority of Lord Beaverbrook's underlings regarded his insistence that there would be no war "this year or next year either" with amused or angry contempt, even though, of course, they dared not openly deride it for fear of losing their jobs. Compared with such villainies, too lavish a hand with the cheesecake, and even unwelcome calls on Mr. Evelyn Waugh, pale into insignificance.

No, as Mr. Williams repeatedly insists, the only mortal sin in journalism is to rig the news, whether in the interest of advertising revenue, circulation, or (in many respects worst of all) of some cherished proprietorial conviction or cause. Having said this, it has to be admitted, as everyone who has ever been a newspaper correspondent knows, that there is no such thing as impeccably objective reporting. We all have, or feel bound for interested or disinterested reasons to adopt, a point of view which cannot but colour our accounts of what we see and hear. I think Mr. Williams is a shade naive in his unqualified acceptance of C. P. Scott's famous dictum: "Comment is free, but facts are sacred." Scott tended to collect on the *Manchester Guardian* journalists with strong opinions and violent prejudices; they wrote better, could be paid less, and were altogether more adventurous and enterprising than meeker brethren. Robert Dell, F. A. Voigt, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, H. W. Nevinson—their numerous qualities as writers and reporters assuredly did not include impartiality and objectivity. The buzzing of the bees in their bonnets was transferred to the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*. In more recent times, Mr. Koestler on Palestine, Alistair Cooke on American politics, Naomi Mitchison on the U.S.S.R. (where, she wrote not so very long ago, bread would soon be free) have carried on the same tradition.

Scott used to have a characteristically courteous habit of writing one a little note in his own hand to explain why something one had written had not been used. I got such a note about a short leader I had done on a new and rather hideous gasometer which had been erected in Manchester. The non-appearance of this leader was scarcely surprising in view of the fact that, had it appeared, it would have accompanied a gas supplement packed with lush advertising. "There are occasions," Scott's note began, "when truth should be economised." Economising truth can distort just as much as stretching or embroidering it—as I discovered when I sent reports to the *Manchester Guardian* of the appalling famine conditions in the Ukraine and the Caucasus resulting from Stalin's brutal collectivisation of agriculture. I remember reflecting bitterly in those days that Scott's dictum would go better the other way round: "Comment is sacred, facts are free." Truth can be economised out of existence.

Mr. Williams is undoubtedly correct when he concludes that the main danger to the press arises, not so much from infringement of a mythical objectivity, or from offences against Sir William Haley's canons of good taste, as from subservience to governmental or party-machine control. It is

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this rather than editorial irresponsibility which may well drain newspapers of their life, and therefore destroy their usefulness. The hand-out, the public relations officer, the off-the-record briefings and appeals to be "helpful," are far more menacing than undue preoccupation with vital statistics. Many journalists must have noticed, as Mr. Williams has, how during the last three decades a bad tendency towards editorial uniformity has been manifest in the press; how the grisly example of the BBC has provided an oleaginous slide to perdition. Thomas Barnes, an early and famous editor of *The Times*, when accused of "dangerous radicalism," replied that there was nothing the "servile adherents" of Ministers dreaded so much as "a free journal, unattached to any other cause than that of truth, and given to speak boldly of all parties." Now, not much more than a century later, a sometime Director-General of the BBC sits in his chair. He, as Mr. Williams indicates, takes a very different view of his duties from that of his great predecessor. In his opinion, "the deeper, and the subtler influence—and I believe the healthier one compared with the old days—is the formative and interpretive power of the press today." This, he goes on, "may have little of the old dramatic effects obtained in Barnes's day. It can be far more constructive, widespread and continuously in operation." These words are doubtless music in Portland Place, in Whitehall, in Westminster, in all the establishment's many mansions. In Fleet Street they are a knell.

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

The Music Shelf

Life of Rossini. By STENDHAL. Translated by RICHARD N. COE. *Calder*. 30*s*.

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A Dictionary of Vocal Themes. By HOWARD BARLOW and SAM MORGENSTERN. *Benn*. 55*s*.

In his brilliant youth Rossini was freely compared to Napoleon: they were the two world-conquerors. It is one of the charms of Stendhal's *Life of Rossini* that it conjures up for us the atmosphere of those intoxicating days of glory, intrigue and improvisation; the book might have been subtitled "How it Strikes a Contemporary." It is not complete; in 1824, when it appeared, Rossini had another 44 years to live. But it covers all the important operas except *Le Comte Ory* and *William Tell*; subsequent biographers have invariably been obliged to skate rapidly over the last 40 unproductive years of that strange career with the help of anecdotes, speculation and *tournedos Rossini*; so we don't miss much.

Stendhal is an amateur. He puts down every scrap of anecdote that amuses him; he has no notion of evidence; his ideas about music are blissfully unprofessional. But his gusto makes him irresistible and indispensable. For example, his sixth chapter, "The Impresario and his Theatre", is not only a highly amusing piece of journalism; it gives us a valuable picture of the actual working of the Italian operatic system about 1820, and in the process tells us more than we can easily find elsewhere about the conditions in which those often faulty yet delightfully spirited works of art, the operas of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and early Verdi, were delivered into the world. Stendhal's mania for digression is sometimes excessive; this is not so much a book to read straight through, as one to skip and potter about in. He talks much hot air, for instance, about the opposition between what he calls "Italian melody" and "German harmony". Professional fun has been poked at his naive use of the term "harmony", by which he evidently means such complexity of orchestral accompaniment as was likely to distract attention from the melodic line; nevertheless, his remarks on this subject are not quite off the point. The see-saw between simplicity and complexity is one of the recurrent phenomena of musical history; and since nearly all critics and historians come down heavily on the side of complexity (because it is more "intellectual", and gives them something to write about), it does us good to read someone who is unashamedly in favour of the pure stream of melody.

What Stendhal adored in the Italian temperament was its gaiety, spontaneity and absence of constraint, as opposed to the coldness of France and the pedantry of Germany; and he recognised in Rossini the supreme expression of the national genius. Though his notions of Mozart are severely limited, he can surprise us by the acumen of his comments on other predecessors and contemporaries of his hero. On the very first page, for instance, he is dead right about Cimarosa, at that time an imposing figure.

> . . . as soon as the listener is sufficiently familiar with three or four such songs, he can, as it were, *predict* the pattern of all the rest from hearing the first few bars. All Cimarosa's weakness lies hidden in that single word *predict*. . . .

And later:

> The feature which makes the second act of Cimarosa's opera [*Il matrimonio segreto*] almost unbearably insipid to our ears is its lack of *dissonance*.

Though Stendhal is not always so acute as that, and sometimes downright silly, no one who loves Rossini can dream of being without his book; and fortunately it has fallen into the hands of an uncommonly careful and spirited translator-editor. Now and again Mr. Coe's lack of musical knowledge betrays him; his Italian is weaker than his French; and it is a pity that his useful corrections of Stendhal's many mistakes should have been gathered into 13 pages at the end of the volume instead of being printed as footnotes where they belong. But these are small flaws on an admirable enterprise and an admirable piece of book-making, by no means unreasonably priced for its 522 well-filled pages.

The volume of Elgar's letters is a sequel to Dr. Young's large-scale biography, *Elgar O.M.* It is carefully presented and edited, with a full explanation of all now obscure references; but it makes heavy going, and is really only for the specialist. Elgar was not a good letter-writer; his mainly affectionate, sometimes crotchety, disposition has to emerge through a thick screen of jocularity or "japes" (favourite word); and it is a wonderful relief, at the end of the book, to come upon the lively, though surprisingly deferential, letters to the composer from Bernard Shaw. The inclusion of so much that is trivial can be defended, perhaps, on the grounds that only thus can we obtain a rounded picture of the man as he lived from day to day. All the same, I cannot help feeling that Dr. Young, as previously in his biography, has shown little grasp of the art of selection.

> A Mr. Allman from London called the other evening but I hadn't time to see much of him.

That is the first and the last we hear of "Mr. Allman from London"; surely *he* could have been spared? And in these early chapters there is too much, far too much, about a dog called Scap. I am not anti-dog; strongly pro, in fact; but, Mr. Ackerley always excepted, one dog-addict is much the same as another. If it were Mozart's doggie now, or Bach's doggie, I suppose we should lap up every word; but Elgar's doggie doesn't quite make the grade.

For years his friends have been badgering Mr. Ernest Newman to publish a selection from the *Sunday Times* articles with which he has been delighting us during the past 36 years; and hitherto he has always refused. Now, however, Mr. Aprahamian has succeeded where others have failed; and we are all duly grateful to him. The book falls into four parts. The first consists mainly of Mr. Newman's well-known plea for a "physiology of criticism." The second, "Opera and Opera Singers", shows the great man in-

variably penetrating about the former and rather too resolutely scornful to catch the full flavour of the latter. Part 3, "Composers and Their Works", is notable for a long series of articles on *Wozzeck;* while Part 4 shows the master mainly in lighter vein. My only complaint is that 47 articles and under 200 pages are not nearly enough; books of this sort need bulk, and goodness knows there was no shortage of material.

My remaining books must be summarily dealt with, as the magistrates say. *Musicians on Music* is a well selected and highly enjoyable anthology made by Ferruccio Bonavia of the *Daily Telegraph*, who died in 1950, and prepared for publication by Mr. Frank Howes. Messrs. Barlow and Morgenstern's massive *Dictionary of Vocal Themes* is a sequel to their previous *Dictionary of Musical Themes*, which treated of instrumental music only, and which I fully reviewed in these columns. In neither volume do I ever find myself using the wonderful "Notation Index" which is supposed to help us identify a tune we can't place; but I find both volumes useful and entertaining as a sort of Thematic Catalogue to the world's music, obscure as well as familiar.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Haute Couture in These Hard Times

Dior by Dior. Translated by ANTONIA FRASER. *Weidenfeld & Nicolson.* 21*s.*

Paris à la Mode. By CÉLIA BERTIN. Translated by MARJORIE DEANS. *Gollancz.* 21*s.*

On the face of it, *haute couture* is an anachronism. That it survives in Paris today is a tribute to something more than woman's unconquerably frivolous soul. It is a tribute to workpeople who still prefer to devote the inherited skill of their fingers to craftsmanship rather than earn higher wages at machines; and to the Frenchwomen (and their husbands) who appreciate the products of this craftsmanship to the point of paying the very high prices now necessary to obtain them. For it is still private clients who keep the *couture* houses going. That of Fath has 12,000 on its list, the majority being Frenchwomen. Even at Dior's, the most international house, 50 per cent. of the customers are French; at Lanvin, 75 per cent. Trade buyers of models and *toiles* for copying are reckoned to pay the cost of making and showing the collections; then the profits follow from private clients.

Perhaps it is because of its paradoxical position in a hurrying world in which the arts and the elegancies have little place that *couture* is so much discussed today, and why so many *couturiers* are induced to take to their pens. Now we have the Master publishing his memoirs. *Dior by Dior* is an admirably comprehensive title. This book is indeed Dior, Dior, and nothing but Dior: nothing about the other personalities of Paris fashion, no assessment of the fashion industry or its future. It is exclusively the story of Dior's life and how his collections are produced. Yet it is not an egotist's book.

When you meet Christian Dior personally you feel instinctively that he is a sincerely modest man; he seems to swim in an aura of shy simplicity, almost innocence. And this aura pervades his book: his alarm when his advertisement for mannequins coincided with the closing-down of certain famous Paris brothels; his anxiety not to disappoint the public's idea of a great *couturier* when in 1947 his New Look collection made him famous overnight: "I splashed out timidly with a flower in my buttonhole. I ordered several more suits from my tailor, put myself in the hands of a masseur"; the sweetly absurd account of his first reluctant voyage to America. This, to his amazement, he survived, in spite of "lethal cocktails" and furious attacks from "the enemies of the liberated bosom"; and returned home realising that "It is only in Paris that quality of craftsmanship is really understood, and we Frenchmen must preserve this tradition."

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A Werner Laurie publication.

21*s.*

The Bodley Head

It is often said that Dior is a master of publicity (or, alternative version, publicity's pawn). Yet not one franc of his first budget was allocated for publicity. He trusted to the clothes themselves to get Christian Dior talked about; and it is his inspired *couture*, as all who see his Paris collections realise, that keeps him talked about. If that were to deteriorate, all the subsidiary interests of Christian Dior, Ltd., would lose their life-blood. But Dior has a healthy respect for the opinion of the press—a respect which is not shared by Célia Bertin in *Paris à la Mode*. "Criticism in the true sense of the word," she writes, "does not exist in connection with fashion"; and "there is no direct connection between the activities of journalists and the genuine, fundamental outcome." Yet she, as well as Dior, describes the state of extreme tension bordering on hysteria in which the whole staff awaits the verdict of the press. This tension only exists before the Press Opening. All is tranquil for the subsequent presentations to buyers and private clients. Again, Mlle Bertin, writing of Chanel's come-back collection after an interval of fifteen years: "In spite of the instructions given to the critics, who were told to praise her. . . ." *If* French critics take instructions (from whom?), we know of at least one exception: Lucien François who lashed out mercilessly at that collection.

Mlle Bertin does not know the *couture* from the inside: she is a novelist looking in. Although she has gathered together much interesting information about its workings, finance, and personnel, the book strikes a naive note. She seems to take the reader by the hand and exclaim upon the world she is discovering. Her book includes brief lives of fifteen leading *couturiers*. One would like this potted *couturier* section to shed some light upon the period of the Occupation: who carried on the *couture*, under what conditions, and for whom? Instead, Mlle Bertin adopts the method used at the *spectacles de son et lumière* at famous châteaux. The less glorious periods of French history are skipped over quickly, giving an impression of it being just one *belle époque* after another.

Mlle Bertin is a Parisienne and writes sensitively of "the constriction of the heart" that the sight of a beautiful dress can give, and of how, in her efforts to understand *haute couture*, she was often moved to exclaim "It is Paris that makes fashion!" *Why* Paris? Why *is* France the fountain from which all fashion flows? May we offer an explanation from these less elegant islands: "There is something, or there seems to be something, in the very air of France that communicates the love of style. Precision, clarity, the cleanly and crafty employment of material, a grace in the handling, apart from any value in the thought, seem to be acquired by the mere residence . . . the air of Paris is alive with this technical inspiration." That is Robert Louis Stevenson, also a stylist. And it seems as good an explanation as any why the *haute couture of* France is supreme—and survives.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

Indian Approaches

Expedition Tortoise. By PIERRE RAMBACH, RAOUL JAHAN and F. HÉBERT-STEVENS. *Thames & Hudson.* 30*s.*

The Ride To Chandigarh. By HAROLD ELVIN. *Macmillan.* 25*s.*

Goa, Rome of the Orient. By RÉMY. *Arthur Barker.* 21*s.*

India is not only a land of paradoxes but the cause of paradoxical behaviour in her visitors; "it does something to you, you know." Each of these three new books is the outcome of a first visit to that attractive-repulsive, exhausting-exhilarating, soporific-effervescent, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral sub-continent. Of the three books, *Expedition Tortoise* is far the most illuminating, being a composite account of the adventures and impressions of five highly intelligent young men, four of whom were French students of architecture; they all started off in 1950 on a spree into North Africa but only three reached India. Two of these, Rambach and Vitold de Golish, have recently published a most attractive book, *The Golden Age of Indian Art*, based on their researches into some hitherto neglected temples, mostly sixth to eighth century A.D. While on their travels, they often paid their way by working in architects' offices and were later employed or assisted both by the Musée Guimet and by a Danish ethnologist from the National Museum of Copenhagen. But their book is not simply intellectual or æsthetic; it is full of high spirits—and of humanity. Starting with comic picnics in the African desert it ends in a Hindu monastery where the architects-turned-acolytes were surprised to find their fellow-monks celebrating Christmas Eve, Christ being regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu.

At Luxor the students met Schwaller de Lubicz, author of *Le Temple dans l'homme* and *bête noire* of some more orthodox archæologists, and were impressed by his theories which they seem to have tried to apply later to Indian temples —"the temple is a diagram of the cosmos"—but, whatever the validity of such theories, they are certainly right in stressing the basic contrast between India and other countries which contain such ancient remains; in India, unlike Egypt, "the villagers believe that they are the direct descendants of the men who built these temples 1500 years ago"—and they worship the same gods and practise a similar way of life. The Frenchmen were the more able to appreciate such continuity in that, like Mr. Elvin, they travelled the hard way, sleeping in mud huts or in the open and eating the same food as the peasants. Thus M. Hébert-Stevens, riding a motor-cycle solo through the Middle East, is at one moment having funny encounters with brigands and at the next moralising on Afghanistan, a country which "used to be a cross-roads in the middle of Asia" but which now, though acting as a buffer state, has "become the end of the world." Anyone who has gazed from the Khyber Pass towards the Hindu Kush will appreciate this fascinating *peripeteia*.

The most interesting part of *Expedition Tortoise* is the description of the vanishing hill tribes in Southern India, "petrified" primitives such as the Toda in Mysore, who reminded the Frenchmen of Ancient Greek statues and whose 1,300 sins include "To sit down on a verandah and force one's mother-in-law to leave it," or such as the very different Kanis in Travancore, whom no Hindu ever wants to meet and who "live in the wood age," using neither metal nor stone. All these the Frenchmen took to their hearts. Mr. Elvin, their less sophisticated English counterpart (where they call their vehicles Tortoise and Sophie, he calls his ordinary push-bike Sir Walter) also found India a revelation. *The Ride to Chandigarh*, which in fact means the long, long road to Maxwell Fry, is another book worth reading. Lovers of India should not be deterred by the style, which is a curious blend of whimsicalese and slap-on-the-backery; a man is never a man but always a "fellow." Mr. Elvin, for all that, has a heart, an eye, and an ear. He is perhaps too romantic about Mumtaz (whose tomb is the Taj Mahal) but he genuinely loves the landscape, the architecture, and the people. He is full of vivid touches—"the mountains all looked as if their trousers had slipped" or "Camels turning the wells with their proud-prostitute walk"—and is good when he is quoting the people he met. There is the garrulous German from Unesco: "they beat us these Indians; see an American or a German face, just skin pulled over nothing . . ." and the Gujerati student (one of four who cycled with him for part of his huge journey from Bombay to the Himalayas) whose reaction to the caves of Ellora was: "Ellora was built by the gods to the glory of the human body."

Mr. Elvin's own reaction to Ajanta is equally valid: "These paintings are masterpieces in a

dozen ways, but first they are masterpieces of *peace*." To turn from him to the third book, on Goa, is to enter a more querulous and jangling atmosphere. M. "Rémy" on his first page describes Nehru as "disconsolate at not being born a European"; on his last he seems to bank on Portugal as the God-ordained leader of the Western World. In between is a rather dull rehash of much very astonishing history—Vasco de Gama, Albuquerque, St. Francis Xavier. Rémy is probably right about the propagandist twists of the Bombay press, but he himself is patently propagandist, showing the flag in a museum—and is it not odd to talk of "the mere empiricism of geography"? As colonists the Portuguese have probably been in some ways—though certainly not in all—preferable to the British, but, when all that has been admitted, Camoens has been dead even longer than Kipling.

LOUIS MACNEICE

Specialists

Yours Indubitably. By ROBERTSON HARE. *Hale.* 16*s.*

Thursday's Child. By EARTHA KITT. *Cassell.* 16*s.*

Freddy Lonsdale. By FRANCES DONALDSON. *Heinemann.* 21*s.*

Chance brings together, for reviewing purposes, an oddly assorted trio from the entertainment world, but they have one thing in common: extreme ability in their own limited fields.

Photographs in *Yours Indubitably* reveal Robertson Hare in a variety of risible theatrical plights. He is to be seen in woman's togs and being browbeaten by Alfred Drayton: as a cricketer called Gussie Pogson and captaining, apparently, England: and as himself, more or less, bound and gagged and peering anxiously out from the dusty bowels of a grandfather clock. These comical snaps will waft theatre-goers, middle-aged or worse, instantly back to the Aldwych Theatre and those triumphant farces. Heavens the crush, as one was shepherded in by a purple, jolly uncle and crammed, chocs at the ready, into the dress circle. Immense family parties all around were preparing to give forth the kind of laughter known as "roaring" and "guffawing"; when you weren't doing that, you were supposed to be coasting along on "chuckles." Tom Walls, Ralph Lynn and dear Mary Brough were wonderful performers but, as the curtain rose, one young heart at least sank.

Reminiscences of these and other days Mr. Hare dishes out with a wealth of bonhomie and clichés. The result is sadly dull. He is far too kind and gentlemanly to tell us anything really *piquant* from the land of paint and powder, or even to confess to the full horror of bouncing on as Ernest Ramsbottom or the Rev. Slowley Jones, or whatever, and having his trousers filched to gales of merriment night after night after night.

Thursday's Child, you will remember, has far to go, and Miss Kitt kicked off in South Carolina. Indeed, the first part of her autobiography could go straight on to celluloid as a Tennessee Williams offering and no questions asked. There are a Mama who hooks it rather sharply with another man, sniffing dogs, dem cotton bales, dat chain gang, folks drooling, raggedy covers, shouts of "yalla gal", watermelons, Miss Kitt's growing interest in her own torso, and various local incomprehensibles such as clabber milk, croaker-sack, coochie-coo, and the fact that munching lima-bean vines doesn't do cows any good (they tend to foam at the mouth and expand to three times their size).

On the stage, it is Miss Kitt's line, when not being funny (and very funny she can be), to be sultry, remote and smouldering, which she can manage splendidly. Her attempts to transfer all this to the written word are less successful. Here she is after glimpsing a well-known guitar player at work.

> The sound of his music box twanged my womanliness. It edged my senses and wined my

ALGER HISS

THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION

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Edward Gordon Craig

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bittered blood. I watched his hands, as they told of love and hatred, of sensuous love and faithless women. His mouth moved as though he was making love to the words he spoke, but they did not make love to him. His eyes dimmed with "Come hither, so that I may suck you in. There's no woman I cannot have and any woman can have me."

"Who's that?" I asked Roxie.

After a spell with the Katherine Dunham troupe, Miss Kitt gradually developed into a solo performer and advanced rapidly into what her publisher states to be the £80,000-a-year bracket. As always with books of this kind, the mink period is less interesting than the rabbit, even though, the blurb goes, "behind the glitter and the sophistication still lies the paradox, of the piccaninny from the cotton fields." And a happy little piccaninny too in that nice, high bracket.

The best for the last. Frederick Lonsdale's daughter, Frances Donaldson, has written the life of her father and provided a highly memorable and well-written book, as good as Daphne du Maurier's *Gerald*. It is the story of an enraging, fascinating, snobbish, egotistical playwright, told with love and extreme candour.

The theatrical sense is a rare gift and often pops up in the least likely of persons (Barrie and Galsworthy are examples, and Mr. Maugham never seems exactly made for the *coulisses*). Lonsdale was the son of a Jersey shopkeeper. He was virtually uneducated, tried being a soldier and a railway clerk, married young, and then drifted into the theatre as a writer. His wit and abilities were remarkable and he created a new kind of play, set in a peculiar, half-dream, upper-crust, glittering stage world where Dukes were two a penny. His most astonishing output of work was in the Twenties, when twelve of his pieces were produced (five of them being musical plays) with an average run of 330 performances. Even before this, he had hardly been unsuccessful (is it now remembered that he wrote *The Maid of the Mountains* and that, during rehearsals, fiery José Collins is said to have thrown a plate of Irish stew over the manager?).

Frederick Lonsdale became very rich, admired and beloved, and succeeded in making himself and some others extraordinarily unhappy. He acquired a taste for society, removed himself and his family from a reasonably happy and placid existence at Birchington, and became the restless, travelling eccentric with the white socks, the frequenter of the Garrick, of the Embassy Club and Ciro's, the maker of enemies, the amusing, lonely, gregarious, infuriating and charming character which Mrs. Donaldson has made so amazingly vivid and taking.

Lonsdale declined to write his own life story. He left it to his daughter, and added the request that she should tell the truth. She has done just that and the result is a quite unusually satisfying, and often rather moving, biography.

ARTHUR MARSHALL

Things Past

It's Me, O Lord! By A. E. COPPARD. *Methuen*. 22*s*. 6*d*.

Stars and Markets. By SIR CHARLES TENNYSON. *Chatto & Windus*. 21*s*.

It's Me, O Lord! was described by its author as "An abstract and brief chronicle of some of the Life with some of the Opinions of A. E. Coppard." The reader is warned that he embarks upon this by no means brief or abstract chronicle at his own risk. Turn but the first page, and he is lost: transfixed by the glittering eye and nimble tongue of one who, Folkestone born, is palpably the Ancient Mariner of the Kentish coast. Beat his breast as he may, plead a marriage register to sign, a funeral procession to follow, he will, notwithstanding, be compelled to listen like a three years' child while, triumphantly, this septuagenarian hath his will. Such a feat on the part of the Mariner is all the more creditable in that he is patently flurried by the conflicting winds and currents that beset his course on this belated voyage of self-discovery.

> But I am at my old fault again, wandering from the point or thread of whatever it is, I must get back to my Brighton although there may be little point in that either. This book is not to be taken as my authentic history; memory is coy and clarity fails me, charity too—though there must be some reticence if only for politeness' sake, and I have, naturally, some inhibitions which happily conceal some shames, so I am not to be trusted all the way.

Our trust, nevertheless, is cunningly solicited in the last chapter of all, wherein, brought up short before the customs-barrier of the final page, the author has this to say. "I am able to declare that thus far my autobiography has no more pure fiction in it than my fiction has pure autobiography."

Like many other men, Coppard, writing in his late seventies, was often rambling and repetitious: like very few men, old or young, he was always ebulliently alive and brilliantly evocative. Here, for a change, is memory gilded o'er, not with the sickly radiance of nostalgia, but with all the glory and the freshness of a dream that has crystallised out in the full daylight of the poetic vision.

A. E. Coppard was born in 1878. His father was a journeyman tailor, who, when Alfred was five, inexplicably deserted his family. The mother then moved to Brighton, where on eighteen shillings a week she managed to keep herself and four children. Alfred left school when he was nine, and went to work as an errand boy in London, first with the amiable tailor, Mr. Alabaster, and later at Reuter's Telegraph Agency, where, grey-and-green clad, he ran through the streets of the city delivering the hand-written telegrams that carried the latest news of the Spanish-American war. His friend Tom Olliver excepted, Coppard was over thirty before he met anyone with whom he could discuss the pleasures of literature: he was the same age before he could afford to wear an overcoat. By that time, he had married and moved to Oxford, where for twelve years he was a clerk at the Eagle Ironworks. It is appropriate that Coppard should early have developed a strong admiration for the work of Thomas Hardy: for here, now, and at Oxford, was a Jude, no less obscure than Hardy's, who, by-passing the academic highroad so industriously trodden by his contemporaries, succeeded in reaching a goal inaccessible to all but the most gifted of the many gifted men who were by this time his personal friends.

Plainly, it is more satisfactory, emerging from social and literary obscurity, boldly to register one's name with posterity, than willy-nilly to accept the distinction which is the unearned income as well as the unearned incubus attendant upon ancestral genius. Sir Charles is a grandson of Alfred, Lord Tennyson: inevitably, the most interesting chapters of an uneven but singularly pleasant book are those devoted to childhood recollections of Farringford and Aldworth. The aged poet comes sturdily to life, wearing still, in the late eighties, very much the same clothes as he had worn in the reign of William IV: "a sort of John Bull frock coat, black in winter and grey in summer, with full skirts and broad 'poacher's' pockets, rather loose trousers of the same material, hanging in wrinkles which made his legs look like the hind legs of an elephant. . . ."

Although the author's stepfather, Augustine Birrell, is fully and affectionately described in these pages, the portrait of Frederick Locker is the subtler of the two. Twice married, the father of four boisterous children and the kindest of friends, he yet harboured some innate distaste for the vehemence of life which suggests a temperamental affinity with those curiously withdrawn characters so brilliantly delineated by Henry James. There can be little doubt, for instance, that the fate of John Marcher, to whom nothing in life was ever to happen, would intimately have appealed to the man who, while counting over, in an essay, the manifold blessings of his existence, suddenly and disconcertingly added: "I want less than I have got, I want to be left alone."

BETTY MILLER

The Riddle of the Reds

British Labour and the Russian Revolution, 1917-1924. By S. R. GRAUBARD. *Oxford: Harvard.* 30*s.*

The Two Revolutions. By R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART. *Phœnix House.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This year is the fortieth anniversary of the Russian revolution. Nearly everyone would agree that it was the greatest event of the century, certainly the one which has caused most stir and turmoil. Beyond that we are no nearer agreement than the men who first peered through the mist in November, 1917. Is Soviet Russia Utopia? Or is it Hell on earth? The most tolerant retreat to the verdict—a bit of both. The curtain of ignorance, prejudice, and illusion between Russia and the rest of the world has never been raised since 1917. In Russia itself there is to this day no reliable or critical account of the revolution; and the subject must cause endless embarrassment to teachers when it has to be handled in school. We are in nearly as bad a plight: one work of genius by John Reed, another of very different character by Trotsky, a pedestrian though sound survey by Chamberlin, and then—nothing. Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart gives us little help in this brief sketch. The reader gathers that Sir Robert saw it happen, but hardly what he saw. The writing is brisk and allusive, its prize sentence about Lenin: "Like Winston Churchill, his married life was happy and beyond reproach."

Mr. Graubard, an American scholar, does more to enlighten us. He has got a splendid subject: what the British Labour movement made of the Russian revolution in its early days. He cannot be said to have written a good book. Indeed this is not a book at all, but an academic thesis at its drabbest. The various aspects are arranged like so many lumps of raw meat at a butcher's shop: plenty of materials for a tasty dish, but no cooking. Probably he has attempted too much. Labour's policy towards Soviet Russia from the struggle against intervention to the recognition of 1924 would make a book in itself. But Mr. Graubard has been drawn into other themes: the rise of the British Communist party, relations between the Second and Third Internationals, the Communist challenge to the Trade Unions, and—most difficult of all—Labour interpretations of what the revolution meant. Here his treatment is frankly inadequate, mere hints for a more systematic study.

Moreover, this book, to my mind, is often mistaken in its method. American scholars are rightly attracted to the theme of public opinion; and they think mistakenly that this can be displayed from the leading articles of daily newspapers. These certainly provide material for an interesting anthology, as in the present case; but they lack background. To understand what was in men's minds one has to go to longer articles, to pamphlets and to books. Mr. Graubard analyses briefly the books by George Lansbury, Ethel Snowden, and Bertrand Russell. He does not attempt to weigh them, and he says nothing about shorter works. One striking omission, for instance, is the Soviet conquest of Menshevik Georgia. From this Socialists could have drawn the lesson that they have now learnt from Hungary—and a few did. Mr. Graubard concludes that British Labour was sympathetic to Soviet Russia in international affairs and hostile to Communism at home. This is plausible but superficial. The attitude was much more of a piece, or rather of two pieces. On the one hand, Soviet Russia was a tyranny and Communists, including British Communists, unscrupulous. On the other, Russia was a Socialist state, and Communists, even the British ones, often spoke what would have been sound sense in anyone else. Labour has always oscillated from one pole to the other and sometimes occupied both poles at once. Trotsky, himself an opponent of the Georgian affair, wrote a defence of it entitled "Between Red and White." This has always been our position. No wonder we are often called Pink.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

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A Selected List of Spring and Summer Books

THE books listed below are a selection from those which have been announced for publication between now and the end of September, excluding reprints and children's books. For reasons of space, we have had to leave out some titles announced for this period, as they have already appeared in our selected list of last autumn. Some prices are, of necessity, provisional.

Art, Drama, Music

H. ALGERANOFF: My Years with Pavlova. *Heinemann.* 25*s.*

JEAN ANOUILH: La Sauvage. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

J. C. ARGAN: Botticelli. *Zwemmer.* 45*s.*

W. H. AUDEN, C. KALLMAN and N. GREENBERG: An Elizabethan Song Book. *Faber.* 32*s.* 6*d.*

FERRUCCIO BUSONI. (Tr. ROSAMOND LEY): The Essence of Music. *Rockliff.* 21*s.*

PETER COTES: Handbook for the Amateur Theatre. *Oldbourne.* 30*s.*

J. H. DUVEEN: The Rise of the House of Duveen. *Longmans.* 18*s.*

WILLIAM S. LIEBERMAN: Matisse: 50 Years of his Graphic Art. *Thames & Hudson.* 50*s.*

WILLIAM MANN: Richard Strauss. *Dent.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

DAVID PIPER: The English Face. *Thames & Hudson.* 35*s.*

F. RAMSAY and C. E. SMITH: Jazzmen. *Sidgwick & Jackson.* 30*s.*

ROBERTSON (Ed.): Chamber Music. *Penguin.* 5*s.*

FILIPPO SACCHI: The Magic Baton. *Putnam.* 21*s.*

BRUNO WALTER: Gustav Mahler. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Autobiography, Letters, Memoirs

EDITH BONE: Prisoner in Hungary. *Hamish Hamilton.* 21*s.*

FRANK BRADY and F. A. POTTLE (Ed.): Boswell in Search of a Wife. *Heinemann.* 30*s.*

VERA BRITTAIN: Testament of Experience. *Gollancz.* 18*s.*

VAN WYCK BROOKS: Days of the Phoenix. *Dent.* 30*s.*

RICHARD CHURCH: The Golden Sovereign. *Heinemann.* 21*s.*

COLETTE: My Apprenticeships and Music-Hall Sidelights. *Secker & Warburg.* 15*s.*

HUGH DALTON: The Fateful Years: 1931-1945. *Muller.* 30*s.*

DAVID GARNETT: Familiar Faces. *Chatto.* 21*s.*

BENJAMINO GIGLI: Memoirs. *Cassell.* 25*s.*

STUART GILBERT (Ed.): Letters of James Joyce. *Faber.* 50*s.*

MAURICE GOUDEKET: Close to Colette. *Secker & Warburg.* 21*s.*

SIR BASIL GOULD: The Jewel in the Lotus. *Chatto.* 21*s.*

LORD HALIFAX: Fulness of Days. *Collins.* 25*s.*

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GEORGE MOORE: Letters to Lady Cunard. *Hart-Davis.* 25*s.*

WILLIAM RUSSELL: My Indian Mutiny Diary. *Cassell.* 30*s.*

H. M. STANLEY: Unpublished Letters. *Chambers.* 21*s.*

DYLAN THOMAS: Letters to Vernon Watkins. *Dent.* 16*s.*

JULIAN TREVELYAN: Indigo Days. *MacGibbon & Kee.* 18*s.*

Biography

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JOHN BOWLE: Viscount Samuel. *Gollancz.* 21*s.*

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Crusoe and Clarissa

THE novel was supreme in its powers in the nineteenth century. In our own it still overwhelms as a diverse collection of contemporary brilliants or goes by habit, but we no longer think we have novelists who can compare in range, confidence and talent with those of the Victorian age. We know that there have been slack periods before; after the strong beginning in England in the early eighteenth century there was a long gap until Scott and Jane Austen appeared. We can hold that the novel has disintegrated with the break up of middle-class society. Already, by the time of Lawrence and Joyce there were signs of a revolt against the sociable individualism which had fed the art and of a return to a static conception of man, to myth, archetypes and anonymity. But it is also true that the genius of the nineteenth-century novelists has become a kind of tyranny to their successors and the critics. It is time for criticism to make a break, at the moment of our end, to reconsider our beginning. Our youngest novelists work closer to the eighteenth century than they do the nineteenth.

Professor Watt's new study* is very much what was required. It is an important, compendious work of inquiring scholarship, with perhaps too many references embedded in it, but alive with ideas. It sets out to relate Defoe, Richardson and Fielding to their society and time, to the intellectual climate and to the new reading public. There is nothing new in this approach. It is a commonplace of Eng. Lit. that the English novel is the child of economic and ethical individualism and middle-class mercantile power, that it assumed a didactic purpose on behalf of that dispensation, and was close to the rise of journalism; but Professor Watt analyses. He watches cause becoming effect in characters like Moll Flanders, Clarissa, Pamela and Robinson Crusoe. Their lives may be spun out through years of episode and adventure, but the adventure is not at random. It is really the serious theme of their society. They are the new individuals hardening off.

The picaresque writing before Defoe reflects the anarchy of the transition from the Renaissance, from the intelligent lackey who is sharpened by fitful service to the self-reliant citizen who has a trade. Professor Watt might have pointed his argument by showing how Don Quixote (who was caught at the moment of madness between two dispensations) was tamed into the eccentric observer of society, the unworldly moralist, when he entered into the English imagination. The knight was reduced to the status of gentleman. But Professor Watt is justified in taking Defoe, Richardson and Fielding at their English starting-point and in saying that they are the first to make the break with classical myth, history and legend, and to invent their own plots; the first to give their characters real, as distinct from allegorical or fanciful names and to regard human nature and time, not as fixed and timeless, but as observable day by day. They are the first to throw out the general and to assert aggressively the interest of the particular, to stand for "ephemeral reality" against the classical rejection of it and, in doing so, to collide with the reigning critical dogma. Nature was replaced by the world and the self-interested way of the world was the new subject.

It was possible, as Professor Watt says, for these novelists to think in this way because of the revolution in philosophy and, also, especially in Defoe's case, because of the Protestant and dissenting belief in the virtue of standing alone. Professor Watt shows us how seriously Richardson considered the new status of women. Defoe's Roxana had rejected marriage because it denied her property and profit; Pamela remorselessly sets out to marry and to rise in station by a business-like resistance which Richardson regards as the new virtue. Clarissa is the tragic victim of the old family system. Lovelace—Don Juan, the traditional rebel against the system—at least can be said to have released her. Whatever may be thought of Richardson's sexual fantasies or his preoccupation with the sadism and masochism of hunter and sacrificial victim—and, as Professor Watt says, he was astonishingly prophetic of later errands into the unconscious—he clearly makes Clarissa's death a martyrdom for the new order. In dying on the desert island of her virtue, Clarissa is as prophetic a figure as Crusoe surviving on the desert island of his phenomenal independence. It is in no mere aside that Professor Watt discusses the lucky fact that Richardson's sensibility to women as persons has a relation with the sudden growth of a large public of leisured women readers.

Fielding stands apart in this general picture. In one aspect he is the orthodox reply to Puritanism, with its introspective, day-by-day moralising, its concern with the moral and economic profit, and its anxiety. Fielding reverts, as Professor Watt says, in an essay which is admittedly less exhaustive than the others, to the neo-classical view of men and women. There is nothing new under the sun. The world has seen it all before. His people therefore live only through his judgment. It has been said that the novels of Richardson and Defoe read like evidence in a court of law. Fielding reads like a judge after dinner. He has seen innumerable Tom Joneses. Human nature is static: the novelists' duty is to apply the resources of education, and to inculcate good sense. Professor Watt does not like Fielding's intervention and thinks, as Henry James did, that it led to a major vice in the English novel. Fielding's influence remained stronger in the next self-consequent century than that of his contemporaries; for some reason, the role of bland arbiter became increasingly congenial. In defence, we must say that if we find Fielding sententious, his personal domination of his subject, his irony and his intelligence, have given the English novelist a tradition of sociable generalisation which was valuable in the portrayal of an exuberantly expanding nation. Professor Watt does grant that the technique enabled Fielding to do more than portray individuals: he portrayed a society. If he imposed plot in disregard of character, he rarely leaves us unconvinced and (within his own comic terms) his view of the emotions does not seem to me as inadequate as it seems to Professor Watt. Fielding has the defensible opinion that people are only too proficient in their emotions. Does Sophy forgive Tom too suddenly? No; she has had her cry, she is a woman of sense, she is a person. She is imbued with Fielding's classical knowledge that Nature has seen all this many, many times before. She has not, by the fascinating stratagems of Puritan self-deception, advanced to an improved social position like Pamela, or to a peculiar world of sexual disorientation, like Clarissa. She has become agreeable. Professor Watt dissents.

The greatness of Fielding is that he was the first to find a means of portraying his society organically. The difficulty for us is that, as an innovator, he was consciously conducting a literary campaign and was too well-educated; and nothing dates a novelist so much as too good a brain and too good an education. But I think it was chiefly Fielding's training in the theatre that led him to see his principal characters as unchanging types. He writes as a discursive critic, standing outside on the ground of another medium.

If we have reservations about Professor Watt's Fielding, we must welcome his re-establishment of Defoe. He was denigrated because Bloomsbury admired him for an irony which, as Professor Watt says, was often theirs and not his. He is aware of Defoe's deficiencies when we compare him with the greater novelists; but Defoe brings out, in this critic, a feeling for that quality in a novel which, sooner or later, gives it a recurring importance. The novels of the past die many deaths and become unreadable, but, at the appropriate time and when the right words are said, their force comes back to them. I mean by the right words, the ones that make criticism valuable to the creative writer rather than to the academics, when criticism turns aside, for a moment, from its responsibility to Literature and is active on behalf of the present makers of it. Here Professor Watt's words on Defoe have a bearing. They suggest the reason for thinking that the neglected eighteenth-century novelists, rather than the Victorians, are the writers that may have something to say to us. In France, both Camus and Malraux have both spoken for Defoe. Professor Watt says:

> Defoe's concentration on isolated individuals, it would seem, is closer to the view of life held by many writers today than to those held in the intervening centuries. It is likely that these writers read more into Defoe than he seriously intended, and that the modern alienation is much more complex and less revolutionary than that of Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders. But whatever Defoe's consciousness of the symbolic quality of his novels may have been, it is certain that, at the end of the long tradition of the novel and of the society whose individualism, leisure and unexampled security allowed it to make personal relations the major theme of its literature, Defoe is a welcome and portentous figure. Welcome because he seems long ago to have called the bluff of the novel —its suggestion that personal relations are the be-all and end-all of life; portentous because

* *The Rise of the Novel.* By IAN WATT. *Chatto & Windus.* 25s.

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Like buttercups beneath the chin
Madonna lilies gleam above
Tender lines of bone are hung
With summer flags with irises
Violets of Christmas turn
In the moulding of her eye
She is death's antithesis
Time itself shall cherish her
Knowing better than to try
The granite bloom of innocence.

PAT KAVANAGH

The Naked and the Nude

For me, the naked and the nude
(By lexicographers construed
As synonyms that should express
The same deficiency of dress
Or shelter) stand as wide apart
As love from lies, or truth from art.

Lovers without reproach will gaze
On bodies naked and ablaze;
The Hippocratic eye will see
In nakedness, anatomy;
And naked shines the Goddess when
She mounts her lion among men.

The nude are bold, the nude are sly
To hold each treasonable eye.
While draping by a showman's trick
Their dishabille in rhetoric,
They grin a mock-religious grin
Of scorn at those of naked skin.

The naked, therefore, who compete
Against the nude may know defeat;
Yet when they both together tread
The briary pastures of the dead,
By Gorgons with long whips pursued,
How naked go the sometime nude!

ROBERT GRAVES

Two Way Poem

Some seek what Arthur found—
The sword sunk in the stone,
That freed would cut the blind
Impasse of the mind—
They seek and cannot find;
They find; they pull with might and main—
The sword cleaves to the stone.

To break their mental bars
They beat against the sky;
The apple's bitter in their mouth,
The wine is water, water drought;
Despair they then enthrone,
And for their Fleece, their golden Grail,
A shuttered house on a darkened vale.

Tall grows the grass in Avalon.
Some to the green past would return,
And seek as their own death's kingdom;
We claim life's living room:
With conscious purpose, conscious will,
Over shuttered house and darkened vale
We lift our banner, our scarred red Grail.

EWART MILNE

Prophets at a Loss

Love, Freedom, and Society. By JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY. *Cape.* 18*s.*

Like the enigmatic posters announcing West End films, the title of Mr. Murry's new book tells one nothing and everything about it. Remembering soporific volumes of socio-theology translated from the German, you may be put off by its apparently abstract concern with the Crisis of Our Time; but, although this is its subject, the book itself is acute, eloquent, up-to-date, and personal. It provides a very English descant to the themes so passionately explored by current French writers; and it does so by the novel and happy device of juxtaposing the key beliefs of D. H. Lawrence and Albert Schweitzer, and subjecting both to friendly but exacting scrutiny.

Mr. Murry's starting-point is the very real danger "that the human race will put an end to itself by atomic warfare or the preparations for it." This he regards as "the consequence of a complete failure of the consciousness of *homo sapiens* to adjust itself to the technological revolution." Even short of the H-bomb, this failure is striking. While industrialism has released great masses of men from subjection to the state of nature, it has at the same time shut them up in a machine civilisation which at worst—on a conveyor-belt or in a Stalinist dictatorship—denies human personality, and at best—in a liberal democracy—surrounds them with processed products and a necessary network of bureaucracy. Meanwhile, the religious sanctions which at the Reformation made for tolerance, and have since contributed to the building of the welfare state, can no longer be invoked in any traditional form. One can no more re-create widespread belief in Christianity than one can recall the pre-industrial era or obliterate all knowledge of nuclear weapons. We must, indeed, love one another or die. The problem remains: how can we do it? How can we renew man's awareness of his human condition, yet without resort to illusory dogma? How can we find a mainspring for ethics that will be strong enough to resist human temptations and to overcome the perpetual tendency to grow tired?

Mr. Murry first examines the answer that Lawrence gave to the former of these twin questions. In this connexion, he has a pregnant remark: "Our demand on marriage," he says, "is become so great because in the world in which we live all other social relations are become so impersonal and dehumanised." The bedroom, in fact, is one of the few places where we are sharply reminded both of our status as human animals rather than voters and of our humble equality one to another, which begets tenderness. Hence Lawrence's faith in marriage as a counter to the falsities he denounced. He sought a renewal of love, says Mr. Murry, "in the pristine instincts": but behind this snap summary lies a good deal of analysis, in which Mr. Murry skilfully parts the various strands of Lawrence's changing thought. He rightly rejects the darker and more sinister obscurantism, and even implies—with what seemed to me unconscious sleight-of-hand—that the tender element in, say, Mellors's "blood-consciousness" could only come "from Jesus." Since, as he later says, Mr. Murry doesn't believe in supernatural Christianity, this implication seems a little odd. It certainly weakens his treatment of Lawrence. However, he has not set out to write literary criticism, although he crosses swords briefly with Dr. Leavis. His aim is chiefly to explore the limitations of Lawrence's ethical "message"; and this he does quite convincingly.

In the book's second section, he turns to consider Albert Schweitzer, whom he reveres for his actions, but whose philosophy he finds unconsciously arrogant and logically inadequate. Schweitzer's philosophical aim, conditioned no doubt by his private *Angst*, was to find self-evidently rational necessity for the Christian ethic. Mr. Murry seems to feel that this aim is both unnecessary and incapable of fulfilment—although the human plight he describes at the beginning of

his book might seem to contradict this view. At all events, he explores Schweitzer's thought with great forbearance. He recalls how Schweitzer was baffled in his quest for rational justification of Christ's teaching, until one day his mind was illuminated by the phrase "Reverence for Life." This "reverence," as Mr. Murry shrewdly points out, Schweitzer uses to smuggle in the extra notion of "sacrosanctity": it leads, ultimately, to the conclusion that all life—even that of lethal bacilli—must be spared and promoted, with the result that no practical ethic, which implies choosing, has in fact been reached. Indeed, Schweitzer's philosophy of truly universal benevolence loads man with extra guilt for the worms and germs he's forced to destroy, but gives him no logical reason for behaving with Schweitzer's own real benevolence in practice. "Reverence for Life," in other words, is a private psychological device for disguising a gap in the argument.

In his final section, Mr. Murry propounds his own solution. This is his essentially Christian-humanist conception of Jesus as a tragic human figure, whose life and death can be a source of love and inspiration to those who contemplate it, even in our day. Traditional believers will hardly accept this view, although they may sympathise with Mr. Murry's exposition of it. Others may be moved by his eloquence and stirred by the courage of his scepticism. Myself, I can see much to admire in his own position: but as an answer to the problem his book poses, this too is no more than a private psychological device. It clearly works for Mr. Murry, as Schweitzer's solution works for him: but there can be no final rational argument for preferring it to Lawrence's, confused and fragmentary as his statements may have been. Even Schweitzer's magic formula has a certain validity, which needs only more careful definition; and Mr. Murry himself, despite his severity with Schweitzer's logical legerdemain, is sometimes guilty of similar unconscious tricks. His book is a tough, absorbing, and valuable inquiry: but it provokes more questions than any one book could answer, and it shows the need for each of us to make his own choice.

RICHARD MAYNE

A Dragonfly in Catalonia

A Train To Tarragona. By ANTHONY CARSON. *Methuen.* 15s.

That famous electric effect of Spain upon the traveller is particularly convulsive if he happens to have a dash of Goth in him. Mr. Carson is admirably equipped to communicate it to you. He knows the language; he has the temperament, extrovert yet sensitive. The only danger in letting so receptive an apparatus roam the peninsula unattended was that he might suffer from double exposure, forgetting in his excitement to wind himself on. This did not happen. The result is an altogether delightful and original book.

The idea had been that Mr. Carson should write about Madrid. Instead he gravitated to the Catalonian town of Tarragona where he already had friends. Hispanophils, in the first flush of Spain-snobbery, mindful of the wise-cracks of *madrileño* friends, may shake their heads and tell you Catalonia is not Spain. And Catalonia, by reason of its nature and history, is unquestionably more European than other parts of the Iberian peninsula. But the suggestion, which you sometimes encounter, that it is a piece of France that has strayed across the Pyrenees is utter nonsense. It has a very strong character of its own. Localism, to say nothing of separatism, is as intense in it as anywhere else in Spain, where, as Ford remarks, patriotism is always parochial and "self is the centre of Spanish gravity." Anyway, as Mr. Carson himself points out, "you are never in the right region in Spain."

As a Catalonian observation post, Tarragona itself might not seem vitally significant. Mr.

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KEE

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Carson found it very Roman and full of retired people: "they are known in Catalan as the *Si no fôs*, the 'If it wasn't for' . . because if you inquire after their health they reply 'Very well indeed, if it wasn't for varicose veins, sciatica, rheumatism, etc.'" It suited him down to the ground. He has never written better about anywhere.

At moments, the book seems trackless and disoriented like the flight of some gigantic dragonfly, but only at moments. It is centred round one particular family with whom Mr. Carson stayed, and it somehow acquires a shape of its own. One of Mr. Carson's particular merits is instinctive taste. He knows when to stop, to stop fooling, to stop being oblique and far-fetched in his metaphors, to stop going on about drink, and to give you a piece of clear, firm observation. It may be a Note on the family of the Chief of Police; the Sardana; a Gypsy wedding—not in the least banal, this; or a *café chantant* in Barcelona where it is the fashion to listen to and applaud incredibly bad and ancient performers. One particularly fascinating set-piece describes the *castillos* or human castles which function at Catalonian festivals. It is incidentally pleasant to note Mr. Carson's enthusiasm for *Codorniz*, the Spanish comic paper published both in Madrid and Barcelona and often suspended for its satire against the regime. This, with its wild surrealist humour and regular jokes about the Repulsive Boy Vicente, and, if I remember right, indescribably fierce Spanish colonels who make Low's Blimp seem like Benjamin Bunny, is very much to English taste.

Although the book is very short you will have acquired by the end, in addition to all Mr. Carson's vicarious experience, a surprisingly detailed picture of the middle-class life of the town; this covers the relationship, a good deal less uneasy than some might suppose, between the Falange (themselves rent with guilt and discontent) and the rest. It is very much to be hoped that Mr. Carson will one day write his book about Madrid. Indeed, it is his and his publishers' duty to see that he covers in time all the regions. He has, obviously, a very special affinity for Spain. With a little more application, he might astonish himself by producing a masterpiece.

MAURICE RICHARDSON

Many Worlds

Room at the Top. By JOHN BRAINE. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 15*s.*

The Ram in the Thicket. By ANTHONY GLYN. *Hutchinson.* 15*s.*

Without Love. By GERALD HANLEY. *Collins.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

Bread and Olives. By PAMELA ARUNDALE. *Chatto & Windus.* 16*s.*

Joe Lampton, the hero of Mr. Braine's striking first novel, has an eye for the main chance. He is neither an amiable misfit nor an hysterical nagger; he goes back to a grander tradition, he has something of the ruthlessness, the awkwardness, and the shocking youthful vulnerability of Julien Sorel. He has come from Dufton to Warley, as it might be from Bolton to Leicester: from a spiritually dead-and-alive mill-town to a mixed light-industry centre that has some pretensions to social elegance and cultural life. He is socially, economically, and above all sexually on the make; and yet he has feelings, he can hurt and be hurt. He prices everything, suits, restaurants, cars, accents, women. He talks like a cocky little vulgarian—"You look most seductive, I must say"—but we are not meant to feel that he has a vulgar heart.

Joe's way into the grander life is through the local amateur dramatic society. There he falls in love, simultaneously, with the peach-blossomy daughter of a local tycoon and with a married woman, Alice, in her thirties. (I find it unnerving, in novels by young men, to have *la femme de trente ans* evoked, always, in a tone of compassionate elegy, as if she were a silver birch shedding, in autumn, her last stippled leaves.) With Susan Brown, the young girl, he flirts. He has, with Alice, who is generous and wise, a wonderfully enriching affair; his greed, his shyness, his horrible puritanical jealousy, his fundamental grateful warmth, are finely evoked. But at the height of the affair with Alice a know-all friend persuades Joe to make it up again with the tycoon's daughter, who out of hurt *amour propre* has dropped him. He does make it up, and gets the girl with child. Her rich rough diamond of a father tests his honour, and then accepts him as a prospective son-in-law. Joe breaks with Alice, brutally. (He has learned from his future father-in-law that she has had an affair with a man whom he hates.) Alice gets drunk, and gets killed in a car accident. Then Joe gets drunk, picks up a prostitute, and has a brawl. But everyone is excessively understanding; the way is clear ahead for marriage to a rich girl, business success, and, one gathers, gradual desiccation of the soul.

What is wrong with this nearly first-rate novel? It is an *ich-roman*, Joe, ten years later, tells the story. The slickness and knowingness in the writing may reflect his values; one has an uneasy feeling that they also sometimes reflect Mr. Braine's. How far is Joe's vulgarity, his almost indecent obsession with how much things cost, "placed" by Mr. Braine, and how far is it connived at? Was it from worldly prudence or natural delicacy that Joe refrained, for so long, from going the whole distance with the tycoon's daughter? Joe never quite knew, but does Mr. Braine? But, certainly, this novel struck me as getting very vigorously into the thick of life. Mr. Anthony Glyn's novel, by comparison, dodges its fences. The hero comes back from eighteen months' training on a family sugar estate in the West Indies to find both that he is offered a most inadequate job in the firm's London offices and that his brisk, boyish, too thin, unmotherly wife is much keener on her part-time job on a woman's magazine than on looking after her twins. There is a labour crisis on the estates. His cousin, a beautifully drawn obnoxious clubman, offers the hero a well-paid and responsible job as local manager, if he will go back to the West Indies for good. A pretty West Indian girl, of Chinese ancestry, for whom he has fallen on the boat home, persuades him that it is his duty to go back, and offers her body as a sweetener. There is no chance of his wife, wedded to her magazine, following him. He does go back, and immediately the rioters blow up the sugar installations, half-flaying and possibly blinding the hero, and busting the business. The brisk wife now turns up trumps, condoning the afternoon's romp with the Chinese girl, and offering to support the husband while he writes books, which has always been his secret ambition. All the real issues—children versus wife's job, family business versus literary ambitions, sweet, gentle Chinese girl versus jolly, liberal wife—are thus deftly evaded. But the dialogue and the incidental characterisations (most of them utterly irrelevant to the plot, such as it is) ring so true that one does not worry much.

Mr. Gerald Hanley's first novel, *The Consul at Sunset*, is one of the best post-war novels I have read. But *Without Love* strikes me, I am afraid, as not much more than a top carbon-copy of Graham Greene. The hero, Brennan, belongs to an organisation pledged to the renovation of society through indiscriminate terrorism. He has lost his first zest for the notion, he wants to save his soul, and, failing that, at least to save his skin. He has the job in Barcelona, which he wants to duck out of, of killing an aged terrorist called Finck, who is supposed to be writing memoirs that will blow the gaffe on the organisation. In the end, he does kill Finck and steal his papers, which turn out to be not secret documents but low-grade commercial pornography. He hopes to sell them, for his freedom, to his boss, Kowalski. But his mistress, a prostitute with a heart of gold, pushes him over a balcony. The police are now on to Kowalski and *his* boss bumps *him* off. Brennan's mistress and his sister pray

for his soul. What the book needed was the eye of Dostoevsky in *The Devils*—the eye that scoops out the metaphysical hollowness of negative violence, the mean and trivial self-importance that lie, as a rule, behind ideological murder. It should have been tragedy, or terrifying comedy; it is passable melodrama, no more.

Bread and Olives, though not so brilliant, is in the tradition of *The Irish R.M.*, good-natured pastoral with Greek islanders instead of Irish peasants as the loyal, comic natives. It would be funnier if, while reading it, one could stop thinking about Cyprus.

G. S. FRASER

Week-end Competition

No. 1,411

Set by Matthew

Competitors are invited to suggest some new but highly improbable, tax and to submit not more than 120 words (or 12 lines of verse) from the Chancellor's Budget Speech justifying the innovation. Entries by March 26.

Result of No. 1,408

Set by Scythrop

Match me this marvel, save in Eastern clime:
A rose-red city—half as old as Time!

run the famous lines on Petra. Competitors are invited to describe any modern city in not more than four lines of verse.

Report

Dean Burgon's tribute to "the rose-red city" was a delicate compliment; it lent variety to this competition to find here and there among the many entries praising beloved cities an unexpectedly savage attack. One such was Graham Tayar's Soho:

Match me this marvel, save in Comer's time,
A blood-stained village, half as old as crime.

And George Hurren ended his verse on Chicago with the same twist. I liked the opening of P. W. R. Foot's London:

Earth hath not anything quite so insane,
A city where a million clerks arrive by train.

P. Metcalf's "city of sterling and starlings" was pleasant, and E. Jones (London) and Katharine Dowling (New York) almost reached my short list.

I suggest that the prize-money be divided among Goodwill, M. Dann Heisser, Gloria Prince, A. G. Ryan, Perpy Traitor, C. Seymour, M. H. Valentine. All others printed are highly commended, as are D. R. Peddy, Ivy Ireland, M. R. Dunnett and Esmé Kelly.

BRADFORD

This town is built on wool: wool is its gold:
Wool is its blood. I wonder now and then
How anything so soft and white could mould
These smoke-black buildings and these hard-faced men.

GOODWILL

PARIS

Young lovers, tender green, and silver air
Belie your existentialist despair.

M. DANN HEISSER

MAIDENHEAD

Shy town, whose every timid daughter grieves,
Tied to her Ma for life, for men remind her
That any maid of Maidenhead who leaves
Will surely leave her Maidenhead behind her.

GLORIA PRINCE

DUBLIN

Swans on the mud of the Liffey, wit in the slums of the Coombe,
Never a mild moderation, but heav'n and hell in one room.

A. G. RYAN

LEEDS

Ye seek in vain who seek for aught to praise
Where men accumulate and wealth decays:
Of guile the home and sly financial deeds,
Dull, dirty, drab abominable Leeds!

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Doctor Rabelais
By D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS 18 - net
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SHEED & WARD

BERLIN

Sir, have you known Berlin since Hitler's war?
A quarter'd orange, bitter to the core.

C. SEYMOUR

LONDON

Cold concrete covers meadows lost to men;
They did not stop when Cobbett shouted, "Wen."

M. H. VALENTINE

BLACKPOOL

As though her gaudy treasures to decry,
Blackpool points one long finger at the sky.

MARGARET HICKS

NEW YORK

O famous skyline! Megalopolis!
Success's Packard, Know-how's Cadillac!
O Tower of UNO, world-metropolis!
O Liberty with your averted back!

MARTIN JORDAN

BATH

Bath, healing city, cupped in her green hills,
Calls an Assembly; terrace, crescent, square
Gather to dance; her very stones must share
In stately minuets and gay quadrilles.

LITTLE BILLEE

COPENHAGEN

Seven green spires
A mermaid and waterways,
Supported by suburbs
Like an old dame in new stays.

J. OLSEN

The Church of St. Mary in a hollow of white hazel (for
Taffy, no loch!)
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near a red cave,
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City Lights

Out West

When the President delivered his economic message to Congress two months ago his advisers were still taking an obstinately optimistic view of the economic outlook: their fire was still reserved almost entirely for the dangers of inflation. These dangers are now becoming a little unreal. The likelihood of a moderate down-turn in business activity later in the year has increased and its date has been brought forward. Production is flattening out rapidly. On top of the soft spots noticeable two months ago, postponements of expansion plans have grown more common, the fall in demand for light steels is extending to heavier grades, car sales have been disappointing and stocks are rising, commodity prices are easing and retail sales levelling off. Wall Street remains extremely nervous.

Previous forecasts have turned out to be over-pessimistic, and the down-turn may still turn out to be a mirage. But even if it comes, the bringing-forward of its arrival date is all to the good: stifled hiccoughs are the loudest. The main champions of Republican economic orthodoxy (like the Secretary of the Treasury) are now on the run, and government expenditure is rising. If a recession looks like developing in the U.S., it is virtually certain that counter-measures will be taken quickly. Housebuilding would blossom if mortgages were eased, and both local authorities and business corporations have plenty of schemes to bring out of the files as soon as interest rates become more attractive. The next phase in the U.S. business cycle need be no more than a rolling readjustment—though even this is not likely to leave the rest of us quite unscathed.

* * *

The Canadians, whose Treasury and Central Bank are having a difference of opinion along the usual lines, are particularly interested in the course of U.S. business. The flow of foreign investment capital into Canada has become a flood in the past couple of years. American investors have been driven to Canada more and more by uncertainty about business at home and the slightly higher level of Canadian interest rates, while European money is moving into Canada even more quickly than European emigrants. This flow of funds has kept the Canadian dollar at a steady premium on the U.S. dollar (this week the premium touched its highest point since 1933). At the same time, it has set off a tremendous expansion movement, far beyond the scope of Canada's own resources to sustain. Last year investment spending accounted for 26½ per cent. of the gross national product. It was 24 per cent. above the 1955 figure, though 7 per cent. of this represented no more than price rises. What price rises could not absorb was met by a rapid deterioration in the trade balance. The trade deficit doubled last year, and the payments deficit amounted to no less than $1,400m.

* * *

This year's planned investment programme is another 8 per cent. higher. The Central Bank—worried in any case by the fact that the growth of H.P. finance houses is making it difficult to control the banking system—feels that this programme cannot possibly be met from Canada's own resources and is reluctant to see the payments gap maintained at its present level. But a considerable body of opinion (including some members of the government) feels that, while overseas capital is pouring in, the payments deficit is normal and tolerable. How fast Canada should be allowed to expand, they think, is a matter of circumstances, not of principle. But the industrialists who are pressing for an end to the Bank's tight money policy may be disappointed. The main threat to Canada's economic stability lies in its close links with the U.S.—and if U.S. money is to stay in Canada, Canadian interest rates must remain slightly more attractive than those in the U.S.

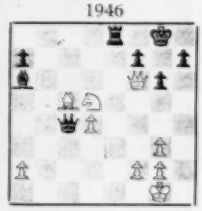
TAURUS

The Chess Board

No. 383. Second Best

When in sight of a winning position one had better watch for danger signals. There may well be several ways to materialise the advantage, and the proper choice costs time and worry. The 2nd best may not be good enough, and the worst may be as fatal as in this position. /24/ 1pKt3kp/ p2K1pp1/ 16/ 6Kt1/. Black should win, he certainly cannot possibly lose. Or can he? Actually, when White (J. Krejcik) checked him by (1) Kt-K4 he was loath to retreat his K or to jeopardize his precious QKtP by . . . K-B4, so he settled for . . . K-R5, the one and only move to give White a forced win by (2) K-K5, P-B6, (3) K-B4, P-B7, (4) KtxP, P-R6, (5) Kt-K4, P-R7, (6) Kt-Q6, P = Q, (7) Kt-B5 mate. Now here – /6r1/ 1p5k/ p2P3p/ 2Pbpp2/ PP1q2p1/ 2QP3kt/ 5PPP/ 2R2R1K/ - is a position in which Black (C. Schlechter) could easily win P and exchange by the obvious Kt-check, but what with the menace of the White Q-wing pawns that may not have been quite good enough, so Schlechter sought and found something immediately decisive: (1) . . . BxP ch, (2) KxB, Kt-B4 ch, (3) K-R1, Q-Q4 ch, (4) P-B3, PxP, (5) R-KB2, Kt-R6, (6) Q-Q2, QxQP, (7) Q-R2, Q-B5! (8) Q-Q2, QxR ch, etc. Or take this position (reported by Paul Schlensker in *Schach-Echo*): /r2q1k1/ pb1R2p1/ 2pQp2p/ 1p3p2/ 8/ P3P3/ 1P2BPPP/ 6K1/. White could easily regain his P by R-K7, but that would be 2nd best only and possibly not good enough, certainly not as decisive as (1) B-R5, Q-KB1, (2) B-B7 ch, K-R1, (3) QxQ ch, RxQ, (4) RxB, etc. Here's another case in point: r1bqk2r/ ppp2ppp/ 2ktb4/ 8/ 1PP1kt3/ P4Kt2/ 4PPPP/ RKtBQKB1R/. Obviously Black's positional advantage calls for drastic action, and there would seem to be several promising lines, such as a B-check on Kt5, followed by the Q-swop and the Kt crashing in on B7. That *may* be good enough, and yet, what with 2 pieces given for a R, it may lead to a doubtful ending. Anyway it was 2nd best to the line actually chosen: (1) . . . KtxP, (2) KxKt, B-Kt6 ch, etc. Here, finally, is a position that may well serve us as the 4-pointer for beginners. White could regain the exchange immediately by the Kt-check, but that wouldn't be so good, since it would saddle him with different bishops.

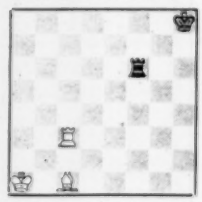
A: Gerald Abrahams
1946



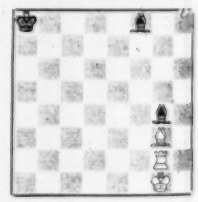
He could do better by Kt-B7 which would give him an almost certainly won ending. But he did better still by deciding the game with one fell blow. How?

B and **C** are both wins for White, both very instructive and not too difficult, I hope, for 6 and 7 ladder-points.

B: Bianchetti 1925



C: M. Havel 1926



Usual prizes. Entries by March 25.

REPORT on No. 380. Set February 23

A: (1) R-Kt8, P-K4. (2) R x R? Q x P ch! (3) K x Q, R-R4 ch. (4) K-Kt3, R-R6 mate.
B: (1) B-K3, R-B6, (2) B-Kt5, etc.
if (2) . . . R-KKt6; (3) B-R4 etc.
C: (1) B-K2! K-Kt2 ch. (2) K-Kt2! B-Q5. (3) Kt-Kt3, B x Kt. (4) Kt-R5 ch, K-R1. (5) Kt-B6, B any (6) B-R6, P-Kt4. (7) K-B3, B any (8)-(12) K-Kt4-B5-K6-Q7-B8 etc.
(1) . . . K-R4 ch is refuted by (2) K-Kt2, B-Q5. (3) Kt-Kt3 ch.
(1) B-Q3? would not work against . . . K-Kt2 ch. (2) K-Kt2, B-Q5. (3) Kt-Kt3, B x Kt. (4) Kt-R5 ch, K-Kt3! (5) Kt-B4 ch, K-B5. (6) Kt x B, K-Q5. Nor would (1) B-B1? do against . . . K-Kt2 ch. (2) K-Kt2, B-Q5. (3) Kt-Kt3, B x Kt. (4) Kt-R5 ch, K-B1!

C was quite a hurdle. Even so a good many flawless solutions. Prizes: E. Allan, K. Beaumont, D. E. Cohen, W. M. Hancock, C. G. Hilton, C. Sansom.

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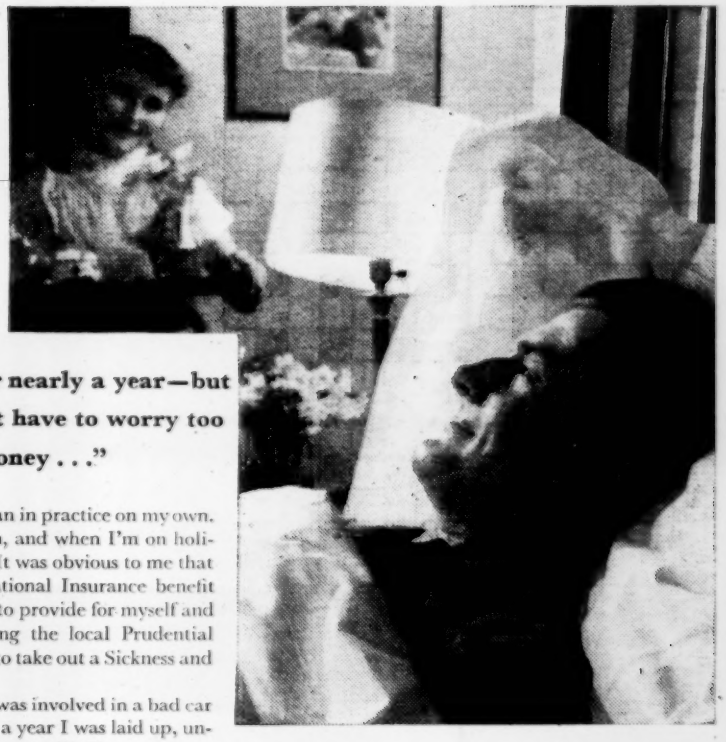

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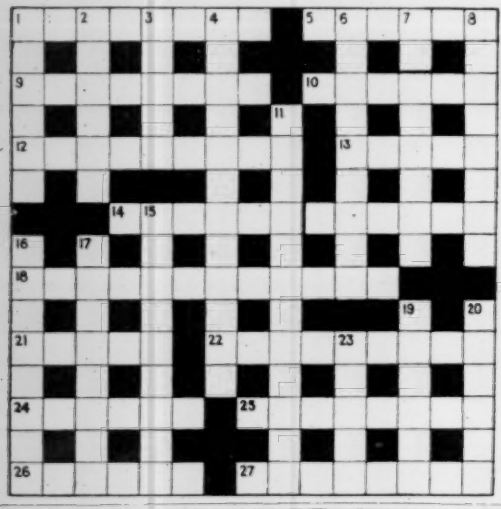


ACROSS

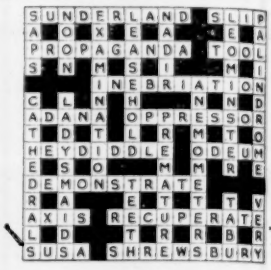
1. Slight fighting, but it involves him getting mixed up with various risks (8).
5. "Books in the running brooks, Sermons in ——" (*A.Y.L.I.*) (6).
9. The game in the advertisement is cut short (8).
10. The big hitter has scattering merits (6).
12. The grouse of a sailor and a fighter in a vessel (9).
13. Warner bowled well and truly (5).
14. Let Henry and us come with a page on a killer (6, 6).
18. Festivals which bring light to the people (12).
21. Fetch an extra in front of the enclosure (5).
22. Alternative for war dead in the period before the war (9).
24. An office for representatives (6).
25. "There are no fields of —— on this side of the grave" (Landor) (8).
26. Trying to cure an animal about to do wrong (6).
27. Relative married and undone (8).

DOWN

1. Notes are here for the instrument in two seconds (6).
2. Raid or alternatively no raid (6).
3. Woman equal to two other females (5).
4. The malingerer goes all round the shelf for a tool (12).
6. Means of keeping a check on a fugitive from the Classics (9).
7. Suit equality (2, 6).
8. Dance for a Bedouin in the desert (8).
11. Female who may be found in the embrace of a variety of single man (12).
15. Free from prejudice then Nigel is converted (9).
16. It covers a weapon, but is a sign of a wound on a poet (8).
17. Though not fellow-travellers they would be exhausted without the short answer (8).
19. What the fan does for victory in the present (6).
20. Made gradual progress, though half this is stolen (6).
23. In the country of river and mountains (5).

SET-SQUARE

Solution to No. 240



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